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SCRAP  
BOOK







I.

Grace Brown Gardner

## WHALING

General

Local Whaling

Brant Point Ship Building - Camels

Brant Point Rope walks

The Camels

Stranded Whales

Unusual Whales

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# The Nantucket Inquirer.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 1857.

## A brief History of Whaling.

The following interesting articles in relation to the early history of whaling, we copy from the Edgartown Gazette. It was furnished by the Rev. Lewis Holmes, of that town, and will be continued in consecutive numbers of that paper.

"No species of fishery prosecuted anywhere on the surface of the ocean can compare in intensity of interest with the whale fishery. The magnitude of the object of the chase, and the perilous character of the seas which it frequents in all climates and latitudes, are features which prominently distinguish the whale fishery from all similar pursuits, and which invest the details of its history with the strong charm inseparable from pictures and verities of stirring exertion—privations—adventure—daring and danger." In a word, it is fishery upon a gigantic scale, in which romance and reality are strangely blended.

"The whale fishery is a practice of long standing in the world. It is supposed that the Norwegians began to prosecute this hazardous enterprise as early as the closing part of the ninth century. From rather vague statement on this subject which have come down to us; it would seem that they confined themselves to the capturing of but few whales in their bays and harbors.

The shores of the Bay of Biscay where the Normans formed early settlements, became famous through them for the whale fishery there carried on. In the same region it was first made a regular commercial pursuit; and as the whales visited the Bay in large numbers, the traffic was convenient and easy.

The Biscayans maintained it with great vigor and success in the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

We find from a work of Noel, 'Upon the antiquity of Whale Fishing,' that in 1261, a tithe was laid upon the *tongues* of whales imported into Bayonne, they being then a highly esteemed species of food. In 1338, Edward III, relinquished to Peter de Payanne a duty of £6 sterling laid on each whale brought into the port of Biarritz, to indemnify him for the extraordinary expenses he had incurred in fitting out a fleet for the service of his majesty. The Biscayans, however, soon gave up the whale fishery for the want of fish, which ceased to come southward,—no longer leaving the icy seas.

In process of time, voyages both of the Dutch and English were undertaken to discover a passage through the Northern Ocean to India; and though they entirely failed in their primary object, yet they laid open the remote haunts of the whale, and immediately began to prosecute the enterprise of their capture. Even then, it was said, they employed the Biscayans as their harpooners, and for a considerable part of their crew. The Dutch and English prosecuted the business with varied success, each claiming the ground for whale fishery in the seas around Spitzbergen. Large companies were formed, and many ships were sent to those northern regions, each armed and prepared to maintain his right and supremacy over the seas. Thus one party would obtain a charter from its own government to the exclusion of the other and all others; at the same time, each claiming the prior right of possession by discovery.

At length, in 1618, a general engagement took place, in which the English were defeated. Hitherto the two governments had allowed the fishing adventurers and companies to fight out their own battles; but in consequence of this event, it was considered prudent by each party to divide the Spitzbergen bay and seas into fishing stations, where the companies might fish and not trouble each other.

After this period, the Dutch quickly gained a superiority over their rivals. While the English prosecuted the trade sluggishly and with incompetent means, the Dutch turned their fisheries to great account; and in 1680, had about 260 ships and 14,000 seamen employed in them."

"From the year 1660 or forty years after the landing of our pilgrim fathers on the shores of New England, down to the end of the seventeenth century, there seems to have been various and as far as new ascertained nearly simultaneous and independent attempts to prosecute this business by the inhabitants of Cape Cod, those of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard, and some of the

British subjects in the bays around the Bermuda Islands."

The following interesting facts respecting the early history of whaling in this country, were obtained from Mss. in the New York State Library, by R. L. Pease, Esq., of Edgartown. They were copied from the originals in London, by Mr. Brodhead, under the authority of the State of New York, and called "London Documents."

Vol. 4, pg. 9—12. In the instructions of the Duke of New York to his agent, John Lowen, he is directed to "inquire what number of whales have been killed near ye place within six years last past, and what quantities of whale bone and oyle have been made or brought in there, and how much my share hath amounted to in that time."

"And you are also to informe yourself how many whales are taken and brought in there, comibus annis. Given May 24th, 1680."

Ib. pg. 71. In his answer, Lowen says, "that the number of whales killed is never observed by any person, nor the oil or bone."

Ib. pg. 84 Gen. Andros on this point states, Dec. 31, 1681, that "Very few whales have been driven on shore, but what have been killed and claymed by the whalers; and, if not proved theirs, then claymed by the Indian natives, or christians clayming the shores in said Indians' right. And tho I have not been wanting in my endeavors, I never could recover any part thereof for his Royal Highness."

Vol. 2, pg. 277. "On ye east of Long Island there where 12 or 13 whales taken before ye end of March, and what since, wee heare not; here are some dayly seen in the very harbour, sometimes within Nutt Island. Out of the pinnacle the other week, they struck two, but lost both; the irons broke in one, the other broke the warpe."

July 5 1669. SAMUEL MAVERICK."

"The first whaling expedition from Nantucket was undertaken by some of the original purchasers of the Island, the circumstances of which are handed down to us by tradition, and are as follows: A whale of the kind called the "Seragg" came into the harbor and continued there three days. This excited the curiosity of the people, and led them to devise measures to prevent his return out of the harbor. They accordingly invented and

\*Chambers.

caused to be wrought for them a harpoon, with which they attacked and killed the whale. This first success encouraged them to undertake whaling as a permanent business; whales being at that time numerous in the vicinity of the shores.

Finding, however, that the people of Cape Cod, had made greater proficiency in the art of whale catching than themselves, the inhabitants in 1690, sent thither and employed a man by the name of Ichabod Paddock, to instruct them in the best manner of killing whales and extracting their oil.

The pursuit of whales was commenced in boats, and was carried on from year to year, until it became a principal branch of business to the Islanders. The Indians readily joined the whites in this new enterprise, and the most active among them soon became boat-steerers and experienced whaler, and were capable of conducting any part of the business.

Boat whaling from the shore continued until about the year 1760, when the whales became so scarce that it was wholly laid aside.

The greatest number of whales ever killed and brought to the shore in one day, was eleven. In 1726, they were plenty; forty-six were taken during that year, a greater number than ever was obtained in one year either before or since this date.

It is a remarkable fact, that notwithstanding the people had to learn the business and carry it on under many hazardous circumstances, yet not a single white person was known to be killed or drowned in the pursuit of whales in course of seventy years preceding 1760. The whales hitherto caught near the shores in boats were of the "Right" species.

The first Spermaceti whale known to the inhabitants was found dead and ashore on the west end of the Island. It caused great excitement; some demanding a part of the prize under one pretence, and some under another, and all were anxious to behold so strange an animal.

The natives claimed the whole because they found it; the whites, to whom the natives made known the discovery, claimed it by a right comprehended as they affirmed in the purchase of the Island by the original patent. An officer of the crown made his claim to it, and pretended to seize the fish in the name of His Majesty, as being property without any particular owner.

After considerable discussion between the contending parties, it was finally settled that the white inhabitants who first found the whale, should share the prize equally among themselves.

The teeth, however, which were considered very valuable had been extracted by a white man and an Indian before any others had any knowledge of the whale.

All difficulty having been settled, a company was then formed that commenced cutting the whale to pieces convenient for transportation to the try works. The sperm procured from the head was thought to be of great value for medicinal purposes. It was used both as an internal and external application; and such was the credulity of the people, that they considered it a certain cure for all diseases; it was sought with avidity, and for a while was esteemed to be worth its weight in silver."

# The Nantucket Inquirer.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 1857.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF WHALING.

With some of its Interesting Details.

BY REV. LEWIS HOLMES.

### CHAPTER I.

(Continued.)

The first sperm whale captured—New life to the business—Whaling in Massachusetts in 1771—Burke's eulogy on New England whalers—Sperm whaling in Great Britain—Revived in France—The American and French revolutions nearly destroyed the business—Loss to Nantucket—Its commencement in New Bedford—Tabular view of the number of vessels engaged in whaling, and places to which they belong.

"The first sperm whale taken by the Nantucket whalers, was killed by Christopher Hussey. He was cruising near the shore for 'Right' whales, and was blown off some distance from the land by a strong northerly wind, when he fell in with a school of that species of whales, and killed one and brought it home.

At what date this adventure took place is not fully ascertained, but it is supposed that it was not far from 1712. This event imparted new life to the business, for they immediately began to build vessels of about forty tons, to whale out in the 'deep' as it was then called to distinguish it from 'shore whaling.' They fitted three vessels for six weeks—carried a few hogheads sufficient to contain the blubber of one whale, and tried out the oil after they returned home.

In 1715, there were six vessels engaged in the whaling business—all sloops from thirty to forty tons burthen each, and which produced an income of nearly \$5000."

As the enterprise increased more capital was invested—larger vessels were built—longer voyages were undertaken, and new localities or grounds for whales were discovered.

Fifty years later, viz, from 1771 to 1775, Massachusetts alone employed annually one hundred and eighty three vessels in the North Atlantic Ocean, and one hundred and twenty-one vessels of larger burthen in the South Atlantic Ocean.

"Look at the manner," says Burke, (1774) "in which the New England people carry on the whale-fishery. While we follow them among the tumbling mountains of ice, and behold them penetrating into the deepest frozen recesses of Hudson's Bay and Davis' Straits; while we are looking for them beneath the Arctic circle, we hear that they have pierced into the opposite region of polar cold; that they are at the antipodes and engaged under the frozen serpent of the South. Falkland Island, which seems too remote and too romantic an object for the grasp of national ambition, is but a stage and resting place to their victorious industry. Nor is the equinoctial heat more discouraging to them than the accumulated winter of both the poles. We learn that, while some draw the line and strike the harpoon on the coast of Africa, others run the longitude, and pursue their gigantic game along the coast of Brazil."

Such was the eloquent commendation given to the energy and perseverance of New England whalers by one of the most distinguished of British statesmen.

"The first attempt to establish the sperm whale fishery from Great Britain was made in 1775. Nine years later, the French undertook to revive the prosecution of this business. The king Louis XVI, fitted out six ships himself from Dunkirk, and procured his experienced harpooners from Nantucket; others emulated the example of that monarch so that before the French revolution, that nation had forty ships in the service.

The revolutionary war of the American colonies, and the wars of the French revolution, nearly destroyed this flourishing branch of marine enterprise in both countries. Just previous to the war, Massachusetts employed in this service three hundred vessels and 4,000 seamen, about half of whom were from Nantucket alone. During that war, fifteen vessels belonging to this Island were lost at sea, and one hundred and thirty-four were captured by the enemy. The loss of life in prison ships and elsewhere, and the immense loss of property shows that Nantucket paid as dearly in the struggle for liberty as any portion of our country.

It was not until the year 1792, many years after the commencement of the enterprise in Nantucket—Cape Cod—Martha's Vineyard, and other places on the Sound, that the attention of the people of New Bedford was turned toward the whale fishery."

From this date, until the present time, no permanent obstruction, with the exception of the war of 1812-15, has occurred to impede the gradual and increasing interest given to this enterprise, and which now assumes commanding commercial importance, and develops unrivaled energy in its prosecution.

The number of vessels in this country employed in the whale fishery far exceeds that of all others engaged in the same pursuit.

The following tabular view will present to the reader, the number and class of vessels engaged in the whale fishery, belonging to their respective places in the United States, as reported in the "Whalemens' Shipping List and Merchant's Transcript," for October, 1856:—

Places.	Ships.	Bks.	Brigs.	Schs.	Totl.	Tons.
N. Bedford, 209†	128‡				337	122,000
Dartmouth, 4	0				10	2698
Sippican, 1			3		3	319
Westport, 1	17				17	3989
Wareham, 1					1	347
Sandwich, 1	1	1			2	292
Fairhaven, 36	12		1		49	15,927
Mattapoisett, 1	10		1		12	3261
Nantucket, 32	4	1	2		39	12,860
Edgartown, 10	4		3		17	4986
Holmes Hole, 2	1	1	1		5	1349
Falmouth, 2	1				3	1111
Provincetown, 1	4	1	16		22	2792
Orleans, 1	2	1			4	638
Beverly, 3					3	616
Salem, 1					1	323
Lynn, 1					1	216
Fall River, 3					3	814
Warren, R. I., 5	10				15	5025
Newport, 1	4				4	1206
Providence, 1					1	299
New London, 32	14	5	12		63	19,176
Stonington, 3	3				6	1949
Greenport, 3	7				10	2958
Mystic, 4	2				6	1840
Sag Harbor, 5	9	2	2		19	6252
Cold Spring, 3	2				5	2129
San Francisco, 4	1	4	4		13	2500

†Christian Review, Vol. XII.

‡Ships reckoned at 400 tons, and barks at 300.

The whole number of vessels employed in the whale fishery in this country, as before reported is 670

\*Macy's History of Nantucket.

Number of ships,	358
" " barks,	259
" " brigs,	17
" " schooners,	46

The tonnage may be put down at 220,000. Value of property, at \$100 per ton, \$22,000,000.

The number of seamen engaged in this business, allowing 30 for each ship; 24 for a bark; 20 for a brig, and 13 for a schooner, would be more than 20,000.

Importations of Sperm and Whale Oil and Whalebone into the United States, in 1856 are as follows:—

Sperm oil,	89,941 bbls.
Right whale oil,	197,800 "
Whalebone,	2,592,700 lbs.



From the Vineyard Gazette.  
A Brief History of Whaling.  
With some of its Interesting Details.  
BY REV. LEWIS HOLMES.  
CHAPTER II.

The Whale—Its Zoology—The largest known animal—Sperm Whale—Right Whale—Finback—Bowhead.

The Whale, is the general name of an order of animals inhabiting the ocean, arranged in zoology under the name of *Cete* or *Cetacea*, and belonging to the class *Mammalia* in the Linnæan system. This animal is named whale from roundness or from rolling.

While living in part or wholly in the ocean it differs in many important respects from the fish tribes, and it is these peculiarities which render it a link between the creature of the land and of the sea. While it has the power of locomotion in the water like other fishes, yet in other particulars, it has no affinity with them; it is as much a *mammal* as the ox, or the elephant, or the horse; having warm blood, breathing air, bringing forth living young and suckling them with true milk.

1.—THE SPERM WHALE.—The *Cachetot* or *Physter Macrocephalus*.—The principal species are the black headed with a dorsal fin, and the round headed without a fin on the back, and with fistula in the snout. This whale is known at a distance by the peculiarity of his "spoutings" or "blows." He can be easily detected by whalers, if he happens to be in company with other species of whales. He blows the water or vapor from his nostrils in a single column, to the height perhaps of 12 feet, inclining in a forward direction, in an angle of forty five degrees with the horizon, and visible at several miles. There is also a wonderful regularity as to time in which he "blows," perhaps once in ten minutes. He remains on the surface of the water from 45 to 60 minutes. He stays under water about the same time. Unless the whale is frightened, whalers make quite correct calculation as to the chances of overtaking him, or meeting him, or when he will rise to the surface after he has "turned fluke."

When the sperm whale is near he can be easily distinguished by the form of his head, unlike any other variety of whale. His head is enormous in bulk, being fully more than one third of the whole length of its body, and it ends like an abrupt and steep promontory, and so hard for several feet from its front, that it is quite difficult, if not impossible for an iron to enter it; as impervious indeed to a harpoon, as a ball of cotton.

Besides, the sperm whale has a hump on his back, which distinguishes him from others. This hump is farther forward than the hump on the Finback whale.

Sperm whales have been captured from 70 to 90 feet in length, and from 30 to 45 feet in circumference round the largest part of their bodies. It is supposed by whalers from their appearance, that they live, or some of them at least, to a great age. One writer on this subject, thought that the sperm whale would attain the age of many hundred years, and even to a thousand years. This, however, is mere conjecture, because there are no dates or facts, upon which to found a correct opinion.

Some whales have been taken, having their teeth worn level with the gums; and then again, in other instances, part of their teeth have been broken off, or torn out by some violent effort.

The whole number of teeth in a sperm whale is about forty-two; they are wholly in the lower jaw, which alone is movable, with the exception of a natural movement of the entire head of the fish.

The teeth admirably fit into sockets in the upper jaw. When the whale is in search for his food, or contending with his foes, he drops his lower jaw if he sees fit, nearly to a right angle with the under part of his body, and then brings his jaws together with incredible energy and quickness.

Sperm whales engage in fearful and dreadful struggles and conflicts with each other. One was captured a few years since, having his lower jaw, which was more than 15 feet long, and studded with sharp pointed teeth, twisted entirely around at a right angle with his body; he was swimming in that manner when he was harpooned. This was an instance of a most desperate encounter. Another whale was captured having a part of his enormous jaw broken entirely off. The front and sides of their heads as well as their bodies not unfrequently exhibit deep lines or furrows produced by the teeth of some powerful antagonist.

It is supposed, that as the sperm whale advances in age, his head not only retains its ordinary proportions, and to appearance becomes enlarged; but the truth is, the other parts of his body, especially his extremities, do actually diminish in bulk and circumference.

In some instances, more oil has been taken out of the head of a sperm whale than from the other part of his body.

The principal food of the sperm whale is "squid," a molluscous animal. "This is an animal of so curious an order as to merit a word of special notice. The principal peculiarity of this molluscous tribe is the possession of powerful tentacula or arms, ranged round the mouth and provided with suckers, which give them the power of adhering to rocks, or any other substances with surprising acuity. Some of this tribe attain to a great size; and as large as the whale is, will furnish it with no contemptible mouthful. In the gullet of one sperm whale, an arm or tentaculum of a sea-squid was found, measuring nearly twenty-seven feet long."

Whalers frequently discover large masses or junks of squid floating about, probably torn in pieces by whales in their search after food. The flesh of the squid is soft—without bones, and somewhat transparent, like the common sun-fish seen on our shores. It is said, that squid have been seen as large as an ordinary whale. This food for the sperm whale is found in great abundance in the Pacific seas.

2. THE RIGHT WHALE.—The whale having this general cognomen, belongs to the species of *Balaena Mysticæ*. There are several varieties included in this species as we shall hereafter observe, and which are distinguished by whalers both in regard to some external peculiarity as well as the different localities where they are usually found.

The Right whale differs from the sperm in the following particulars: His head is sharper, more pointed—he has no "hump" on his back—the column of water which he throws up when he "blows" is divided like the tines of a fork; and it rises from his breathing holds in a perpendicular direction, from eight to twenty feet.

The Right Whale furnishes the bone (*Baleen*) so much in common use, and called "whalebone." This bone is taken from the mouth and upper jaw of the whale, and is set along laterally in the most exact order several inches apart, decreasing in length from the centre of his mouth, or the arch of his palate and becoming shorter farther back; while towards the lips the bone tapers away into more bristles, forming a loose hanging fringe or border.

At the bottom of this row of bone, where it penetrates the gum, and from eighteen to thirty inches downward, we find a material that resembles coarse hair, entwining and interlacing the bone, and thus forming a sort of net work, and so thick, that when the whale closes his lips, to press out the water, the smallest kind of fish are caught in the meshes, and are unable to escape.

Indeed, the edges of the bones or slabs, as they might be termed, are fringed with this coarse hair, and it extends to their extremities as may be seen in the rough state when landed from whale ships.

The length of the bones or slabs, vary in a great measure according to the size of the fish, though some varieties of this species have larger and better bone than others. The value of the bone is enhanced as a general thing in proportion to its length.

The principal food of the right whale is a very small red fish, called "Brit." Immense shoals of these fish are seen on the whale grounds, and the water to a great distance even for miles, becomes colored with them.

When he takes his food, he throws open his lips, or lets them fall, and swimming with great velocity, he scoops up an infinite number of these small fish and others, that accompany them, some of them scarcely larger than half of an ordinary sized pea; he then closes his lips, and pressing out the water from his mouth, ever particle of solid matter is securely retained within.

The mouth of the whale is an organ of very wonderful construction. In a large specimen of the race, it may measure when fully open about sixteen feet long, twelve feet high and ten feet wide—an apartment in truth of very good dimensions. Notwithstanding the enormous bulk of this creature, its throat is so narrow, it would choke upon a morsel fitted for the deglutition of an ox.—Its food, therefore, must be as it really is in very small particles. Such is the wonderful contrivance of nature, and in which we can discover an instance of remarkable wisdom in the Creator and Provider of his creatures."

The right whale does not fight or contend with his mouth or head, as the sperm whale does, but his means of attack and defence are chiefly in his enormous flukes. He will however, when struck, "root round" as whalers say, and not unfrequently in this manner upset a boat.

This kind of whale and other varieties distinguished by the *baleen* or bone, have no regular time for remaining on the surface of the water after they "breach," nor in remaining under water, after they "turn flukes."

The length of a large right whale, is about 80 feet, and some have yielded their captors 250 to 300 barrels of oil.

Such a whale would perhaps weigh not far from eighty tons. Allowing one ox to weigh twenty-five hundred or three thousand pounds, he would weight down more than fifty of such animals.

And what a sublime sight it must be, and whalers have often observed it, to see such a prodigious—living mass, leaping right into the air, clear—altogether out of the water, so that the horizon can be seen between the fish and the ocean! These stupendous exercises and gambols of such huge creatures are termed "breaching."

Sometimes a whale will turn its head downwards, and, moving its tremendous tail high in the air, will lash the water with violence, raising a cloud of vapour, and sending a loud report to the distance of two or three miles. This is called "lob-tailing" by whalers.

The oil of this species of whale is less valuable than the sperm. The "whalebone," which now has an advance price in the market far beyond any previous value attached to it, is obtained from the mouth of the whale about in proportion of 1000 lbs. to 100 bbls. of oil.

3. THE FINBACK WHALE. This is a smooth, slim fish smaller usually than a right whale. He is found in nearly all latitudes. He has a "hump" on his back, which distinguishes him from the right whale. His head and mouth are of the same construction. This whale is known by whalers when seen at a suitable distance by his "blows." The column of vapour rises in a single stream, in a vertical or perpendicular direction. This fish is termed *Finback* on account of a fin on his back, differing in this particular from all other species of whale. The oil obtained from him is of the same quality as the right whale oil.

4. BOWHEAD WHALE. This whale is smooth all over, having no "bonnet on his head" as whalers say, and as right whales have. Their heads differ in shape somewhat from other whales, and hence the name *bowhead* given to them. This species of whale, so far as known, have never been found except in the O-bisk Sea and Arctic Ocean.

The Greenland whale and also the specie called the great *Rorqual* are doubtless included in the name which our whalers give to the *Bowhead*.

There are several other varieties of the whale tribe, and different names are attached to them, such as the "Scragg," the "Hump-back," &c—but the foregoing are all the kinds whether of interest or profit to whalers.

\*Average 8 feet. Longest 14 feet.

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CHAPTER III.

Whale Blubber—Enemies of the whale—Affection of the Whale for its young—Instances.

WHALE BLUBBER.—The following furnishes a succinct statement of whale blubber:—"That structure in which the oil is, denominated blubber, is the true skin of the animal, modified certainly for the purpose of holding this fluid oil, but still being the true skin.—Upon close examination, it is found to consist of an interlacement of fibres, crossing each other in every direction, as in common skin, but more open in texture, to leave room for the oil. Taking as an example that of an individual covered with an external layer of fat, we find we can trace the true skin without any difficulty, leaving a thick layer of cellular membrane loaded with fat, of the same nature as that in other parts of the body on the contrary, in the Whale, it is altogether impossible to raise any layer of skin dis-

tinct from the rest of the blubber, however thick it may be; and, in *flensing* a whale the operator removes the blubber or skin from the muscular parts beneath, merely dividing with his spade the connecting cellular membrane."

Such a structure as this, being firm and elastic in the highest degree, operates like so much india-rubber, possessing a density and power of resistance which increases with the pressure. But this thick coating of fat subserves other important uses.

An inhabitant of seas where the cold is most intense, yet warm blooded, and dependent for existence on keeping up the animal heat, the whale is furnished in this thick wrapper with a substance which resists the abstraction of heat from the body as fast as it is generated, and thus is kept comfortably warm in the fiercest polar winters. Again, the oil contained in the cells of the skin being superficially lighter than water, adds to the buoyancy of the animal, and thus saves much muscular exertion in swimming horizontally and in rising to the surface; the bones, being of a porous or spongy texture, have a singular influence.

ENEMIES OF THE WHALE.—"The whales gigantic as they are, and little disposed to injure creatures less in bulk and power than themselves, find however, to their cost in common with nobler creatures, that harmlessness is often no defence against violence. Several species of the voracious Sharks make the whale the object of their peculiar attacks; the Arctic Shark is said, with its serrated teeth to scoop out hemispherical pieces of flesh from the whale's body as big as a man head, and proceed without any mercy until its appetite is satiated.

Another shark called the Thrasher, which is upwards of twelve feet long is said to use its muscular tail, which is nearly half its whole length, to inflict terrible slaps on the whale; though one would be apt to imagine that if this whipping were all, the huge creature would be more frightened than hurt.

A sperm whale was killed off the coast of Peru several years since, whose sides were found to be greatly bruised, and portions of the blubber were reduced nearly to a fluid state. Two thrashers probably attacked the whale, one on one side of it, and the other on the other, and beat him in the manner above described. This fact shows that thrashers are not only able to injure the whale, but most likely by repeated attacks even to kill it.

The Sword Fish, in the long and bony spear that projects from its snout, seems to be furnished with a weapon which may reasonably alarm even the leviathan of the deep, especially as the will to use his sword, if we may believe eye-witnesses, is in no wise deficient."

Thus Sharks—Thrashers and Sword Fish in pursuit of the whale, and meeting him at every turn, and all directions, must be powerful antagonists even with the monster of the deep; and it is not at all unlikely but that in the conflicts with him, they finally conquer and destroy him.

But there is another, and without doubt, the most powerful and persevering enemy with which the right whale has to contend. This is a fish about sixteen feet long and called by his appropriate name, "Whale Killer." A company of these fish attacking the whale will almost surely overcome and kill him.—Besides, the whale appears to be sensible of the superiority of his enemy.

Though the whale can and does frequently elude and outstrip the velocity of the fastest boats of the whalers, yet, when attacked by "killers," he seems to lose all power of resistance, and submits without any apparent effort to escape.

The "killers" in their relish to fight the whale, have been known to attack a dead one which whalers had harpooned, and were towing to the ship. And so furious and determined were they, that notwithstanding they were lanced and cut most dreadfully by the whalers in order to drive them off, yet they finally succeeded in getting the whale and carried him to the bottom.

Old whalers say, that "killers" will eat no part of the whale but his tongue. They attack him by the head, and if possible get into his mouth and eat up his tongue. The "killers" are a remarkably active fish—and endowed with a set of sharp teeth which may well constitute them a powerful adversary even to the whale, and whose particular and personal enemy they appear to be.

THE WHALE; LOVE AND CARE FOR ITS OFFSPRING.—The strong affection of the whale towards its young, has been many times witnessed by whalers, and yet the nature of their occupation is such, that they turn this interesting and affecting feature of its charac-

over



to a most fatal account. They will try to strike the young one with the harpoon, and if they effect this, are sure of the old one, for they will not leave it.

Mr. Scoresby mentions a case where a young whale was struck beside its dam. She seized it and darted off, but the fatal line was fixed in its body. Regardless of all that could be done to her, she remained beside her dying offspring until she was struck again and again, and finally perished. Sometimes however, she becomes furious on these occasions and extremely dangerous.

Another writer gives the following account of a case which he witnessed in the Atlantic. Being out with fishing boats, "we saw" says he, "a whale with her calf playing around the coral rocks; the attention which the dam showed to its young, and the care which she took to warn it of danger, were truly affecting. She led it away from the boats, swam around it, and sometimes she would embrace it with her fins, and roll over with it in the waves. We tried to get the 'vantage ground' by going to seaward of her, and by that means drove her into shoal water among the rocks. Aware of the danger and impending fate of her inexperienced offspring, she swam

rapidly around it in decreasing circles, evincing the utmost uneasiness and anxiety; but her parental admonitions were unheeded, and it met its fate. The young one was struck and killed, and a harpoon was fixed in the mother. Roused to reckless fury, she flew upon one of the boats and made her tail descend with irresistible force upon the very centre of our boat, cutting it in two, and killing two of the men; the survivors took to swimming for their lives in all directions. Her subsequent motions were alarmingly furious, but afterwards exhausted by the quantity of black blood which she threw up, she drew near to her calf, and died by its side, evidently, in her last moments, more occupied with the preservation of her young than herself."

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CHAPTER IV.

Whale Grounds—Whaling seasons and where species of whales are found—Sperm whale-grounds—Right whale grounds—Humpbacks and Bowheads, where found—Right whale not crossing the Equator—Arctic passage for whales—Maury's opinion of the haunts of the whale in the Polar Sea—Confirmed by Kane—Vessels fitted for whaling—Several classes—Time of sailing—Arrival at home—Length of voyages—Seasons and between seasons.

WHALE GROUNDS, OR PLACES WHERE WHALES MAY BE TAKEN.—The following embrace all or nearly all the prominent localities which are familiar to whalers as whale grounds.

The Charleston Ground—Brazil Banks—Tristan de Cuna Islands—Indian Ocean—Sooloo Sea—New Holland—New Zealand—King Mill's Ground—Japan and Japan Sea—Peru Coast—Chili Off Shore Ground—California—Kodiak—Ochotsk Sea, and Arctic Ocean.

WHALE SEASONS AND THE PLACES WHERE DIFFERENT SPECIES OF WHALES ARE FOUND.—Sperm whales are taken in the North and South Atlantic Oceans in every month of the year.

Sperm whales are taken on the Coast of Chili, from November to April: and on the Coast of Peru in every month of the year. In the vicinity of the Gallipagos and King Mill's Group, sperm whales are found.

On the Coast of Japan, they are also taken off New Zealand and Navigator's Island, from September to May.

From November to March, there is good sperm whaling south of Java and Lombok. In June and July, sperm whales may be found off the N. W. Cape of New Holland. March, April and May, are considered good months for sperm whaling off the Bashee Islands, but ships are obliged to leave this ground after that time, in consequence of typhoons.

From March to July, there is good ground for sperm whaling in the Sooloo Sea, to the Serengani Islands. In the same months, sperm whales are found off Cape Rivers and Canda, close in to the land.

In the Molluca Passage, there is good sperm whaling the year round, the best months, however, are January, February and March.

The English whalers have taken in years past, a large number of sperm whales in the Red Sea.

The area over which sperm whales roam, may include the immense space of the ocean or oceans included between the parallels of 30 and 50° of latitude on both sides of the Equator.

"The sperm whale is a warm water fish," and according to the opinion of Maury, though it "has never been known to double the Cape of Good Hope, he doubles Cape Horn."

Right whale season off Tristan de Cuna, is from November to March; and from January to March off Crozets and Desolation Islands. Sperm whales are seldom seen near these Islands.

Right and sperm whaling off the South coast of New Holland, from October to March.

In August, there is good ground for Humpback whaling around the Rosemary Islands. Right whales are taken in the Japan Sea, from February to October, but Bowhead whales have never been seen there.

Right whales are taken on the Kodiak ground, from May to September; and from March, or as early as the Sea is free from ice, until November in the Ochotsk Sea.

Right whales are found in the southern part of the Sea, and bowheads are found in the north and western part of it at the same time.

Bowhead whales are found and captured in the Arctic Ocean as soon as the ice breaks up, which is usually in June, until October.

The right whale is a cold water fish. It has been found by the examination of "records kept by different ships for hundreds of thousands of days, that the tropical regions of the ocean are to the right whale as a sea of fire, through which he cannot pass, and into which he never enters."

It has also been supposed, that since the right whale does not cross the torrid zone, which to him is a belt of liquid fire through which he cannot pass, that therefore, "the right whale of the northern hemisphere is a different animal from that of the southern."

It is, however, a well established fact, "that the same kind of whale which is found off the shores of Greenland, in Baffin's Bay, etc., is also found in the North Pacific, and about Behring's Straits; the inference therefore, is, that there must be an opening for the passage of whales from one part of the Arctic Ocean to the other."

The following facts are taken from Maury's recent work on "The Physical Geography of the Sea," and cannot fail of being interesting to whalers, and indeed to all classes of readers:

"It is the custom among whalers to have their harpoons marked with date and name of the ship; and Dr. Scoresby in his work on "Arctic voyages," mentions several instances of whales that have been taken near Behring's Strait side with harpoons in them bearing the stamps of ships that were known to cruise on the Baffin's Bay side of the American continent; and as, in one or two instances a very short time had elapsed between the date of capture in the Pacific and the date when the fish must have been struck on the Atlantic side, it was argued therefore, that there was a northwest passage by which the whales passed from one side to the other, since the stricken animal could not have had the harpoon in him long enough to admit of a passage around either Cape Horn or the Cape of Good Hope.

Thus the fact was approximately established that the harpooned whales did not pass around Cape Horn or the Cape of Good Hope for they were of the class that could not cross the equator. In this way we are furnished with circumstantial proof affording the most irrefragable evidence that there is, at times at least, open water communication through the Arctic Sea from one side of the continent to the other, for it is known that the whales cannot travel under the ice for such a great distance as is that from one side of the continent to the other.

But this did not prove the existence of an open sea there; it only established the existence—the occasional existence—the occasional existence, if you please—of a channel through which whales had passed. Therefore we felt bound to introduce other evidence before we could expect the reader to admit our proof, and to believe with us in the existence of an open sea in the Arctic Ocean.

There is an under current setting from the Atlantic through Davis's Strait into the

Arctic Ocean, and there is a surface current setting out. Observations have pointed out the existence of an under current there, for navigators tell us of immense icebergs which they have seen drifting rapidly to the north, and against a strong surface current. These icebergs were high above the water, and their depth below, supposing them to be parallelopipeds, was seven times greater than their height above. No doubt they were drifted by a powerful under current."

Dr. Kane reports an open sea North of the parallel of 82°. To reach it, his party crossed a barrier of ice 80 or 100 miles broad. Before reaching this open water, he found the thermometer to show the extreme temperature of 60°. Passing this ice bound region by traveling north, he stood on the shores of an iceless sea, extending in an unbroken sheet of water as far as the eye could reach toward the pole. Its waves were dashing on the beach with the swell of a boundless ocean. The tides ebbed and flowed in it, and it is apprehended, that the tidal wave from the Atlantic can no more pass under this icy barrier to be propagated in seas beyond, than the vibrations of a musical string can pass with its notes a fret upon which the musician has placed his finger. . . . These tides, therefore, must have been born in that cold sea, having their cradle about the North Pole. If these statements and deductions be correct, then we infer that most, if not all the unexplored regions about the pole are covered with deep water; for, were this unexpected area mostly land or shallow water, it could not give birth to regular tides. Indeed, the existence of these tides, with the immense flow and drift which annually take place from the Polar seas into the Atlantic, suggests many conjectures concerning the condition of the unexplored regions.

Whalers have always been puzzled as to the place of breeding for the right whale. It is a cold water animal, and, following up this train of thought, the question is prompted, Is the nursery for the great whale in this Polar sea, which has been so set about and hemmed in with a hedge of ice that man may not trespass there? This Providential economy is still farther suggestive, prompting us to ask, Whence comes the food for the young whales there? Do the teeming waters of the Gulf Stream convey it there also, and in channels so far down in the depths of the sea that no enemy may way lay and spoil it on the long journey? These facts therefore lead us to the opinion that the Polar Sea may be an exhaustless resource for the supply of whales for other seas, as well as a common rendezvous for them during the intense cold of Arctic winters.

Dr. Kane found the temperature of this Polar Sea only 36°!

Vessels that are fitted out for the purpose of whaling, whether for sperm or right whaling, and the time for which they are fitted, may be classed as follows:

1. Small vessels, principally schooners, though barks and brigs are included, cruise in the North and South Atlantic Oceans. They are fitted for six to eighteen months, and even two years.
2. Ships and barks that cruise in the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean, are usually fitted for two to three years.
3. Ships and barks that cruise on the Peru Coast, or Off Shore ground, are fitted for two to four years.
4. Ochotsk Sea and Arctic Ocean whalers are fitted for two, three and four years.
5. New Zealand whalers, sperm and right, are fitted for two, three and four years.

THE TIME WHEN WHALING VESSELS SAIL TO THEIR RESPECTIVE WHALE GROUNDS. Ships and barks fitted for the North Pacific—the Ochotsk Sea—the Kodiak or the Arctic Ocean, usually leave our ports in the fall of the year, so as to make the passage of the Horn or Cape of Good Hope in the southern summer; these ships will arrive at the Sandwich Islands in March or April—remain in port a week or two—recruit and sail to the north. On their return from the north in October and November, and sometimes as late as December, they usually touch at the Islands again—take in a fresh supply of provisions—it may be ship their oil home, and sail to some other whale ground in a more southern latitude either for sperm or right whaling, or both, and continue this cruise until the season comes around for them to go to the north again. The first is called the "regular season" for whaling, and the second, "between seasons."

Ships that have completed their voyages, and intend returning home, when they leave the Ochotsk or Arctic, general touch at the Islands, or some other intermediate port for recruits, and arrive on our coast some time

in the spring months, and even as early as February or March, though not generally.

The great majority of the ships sail in the autumn, and the largest arrivals are usually in the spring.

THE LENGTH OF A WHALE VOYAGE IS DETERMINED BY THE NUMBER OF SEASONS. One season in the Ochotsk or Arctic, including the outward and homeward passages, consumes one year and a half. Two seasons at the north, including the passages outward and home, and one "between seasons," require two and a half years. Three seasons, including the passages and two "between seasons," will require three and a half years.

Sperm whalers who are not governed by these seasons and between seasons as right whalers are, are absent from home three and a half and four years, and sometimes longer. Indeed, the success or ill success of whaler in obtaining oil, determines essentially the length of voyages.

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CHAPTER V.

Increased length of whaling voyages—Capital—Value of oils and bone—Value of several classes of whaling vessels—"Lay"—Boat's crew—Whaleboats—Approaching a whale—Harpooning—Whale warp—Danger when the line runs out—Locomotive power of the whale—Lancing—Flurry—Cutting in—Boiling out—The "Case and junk"—The rapidity with which oil may be taken.

The voyages of all classes of whalers are much longer and more tedious now than formerly. Whales are more scarce—more easily frightened—they change their grounds or haunts oftener, and besides, the number of vessels engaged in their capture in all seas, is largely increased compared with the number twenty years since, or even later.

More capital is now employed in this enterprise than ever before; and were it not for the greatly advanced prices of oils and bone, beyond what they were a few years ago—taking into account the scarcity of whales—the long time occupied on a voyage—the augmented expense of fitting out ships, in the high price of provisions and other incidentals, the enterprise could hardly be sustained a single year; and certainly but a few years. Immense losses would pervade all departments of this wide-spread system of commercial operation.

A few years since, the price of sperm oil by the quantity was only fifty to seventy-five cents per gallon, but now it brings one dollar and forty cents per gallon by the cargo.

Right whale oil was formerly sold as low as twenty-five cents per gallon by the cargo, but now it brings in the market seventy and eighty cents per gallon, by the quantity.

Whalebone which formerly was sold as low as six cents per pound, and almost a drug at that, in consequence of the increased demand for it, and the various and extraordinary uses to which it is applied, now readily commands eighty cents per pound.

Thus a cargo of three thousand barrels of sperm oil at the present market value of the article, will amount to more than \$130,000.

A cargo of three thousand barrels of right whale oil, including the bone, will command in the market as their value now is more than \$90,000.

A ship, of four hundred tons burthen, fitted for a whaling voyage, may be estimated to be worth from thirty to sixty thousand dollars.

A bark, of three hundred tons, valued from twenty-five to forty-five thousand dollars.

A brig, of two hundred tons, valued from fifteen to twenty-five thousand dollars.

A schooner, valued from eight to twelve thousand dollars.

A vessel owned by a number of persons, or a company, is usually divided into halves—quarters—eighths—sixteenths—thirty-seconds—sixty-fourths, &c.

The "lay" for which an individual agrees to go on a whaling voyage, is the proportion of oil, or its equivalent in money according to the current value of oil, which comes to his share at the termination of the voyage. A short voyage and a full ship, will be a profitable enterprise. Since each and all on board know their individual lays, all, therefore, have urgent—personal considerations to secure both for themselves and employers, the greatest quantity of oil.



The Captain's lay, is from one tenth to one eighteenth of all the oil which is obtained; the first officer's or mate's lay, from one seventeenth to one twenty-fifth; the second officer, from one thirtieth to one fortieth; the third mate, from one fortieth to one fiftieth; the fourth mate, from one fiftieth to one sixtieth; four boatsteerers, each about one eighth; "green hands," or those "before the mast," not far from one hundred and seventy-fifth lay.

Each whale boat when properly pointed, has six men. Some ships man five boats; others four; barks four; brigs three, and schooners two and three.

Each vessel carries nearly double the number of whale boats which it needs. The whale boats, which combine lightness and strength, are always kept hanging over the sides and upon the quarters of the ship ready furnished for pursuit, so that on the appearance of a whale being announced from aloft, one or more boats can be despatched in less than a minute.

When a boat approaches the whale sufficiently near to strike, which is close alongside, and at other times on the top of his back, the boatsteerer, who has the forward oar, immediately "peaks" it, and taking his position at the head of the boat, with harpoon in hand, he hurls it with all his energy, and generally with such force and precision, that he buries the fatal iron in the body of the whale and sometimes he is killed almost instantly.

The harpoon, with which the whale is first struck, is a most important weapon, made of the toughest iron, somewhat in the form of an anchor, but brought to an edge and point. Instead of steel being employed, as is commonly supposed the very softest iron is chosen for this important implement, so that it may be scraped to an edge with a knife. A long staff is affixed to the harpoon by which it is wielded. Connected with the harpoon then is a strong line regularly coiled in the tub; when the whale is struck, and is disposed to dart away or dive down to the depths of the ocean, he carries the iron sticking fast by the bars, while the coiled line runs with amazing velocity. From a tub near the stern of the boat, it passes around a loggerhead, and over the seats of the oarsmen to the bow of the boat, and then a shieve or pulley is provided, over which it passes to the whale. The friction sometimes is so great in consequence of the rapidity with which the line is carried out by the whale, if by accident it gets out of its place, the bow of the boat is speedily enveloped in smoke, and would burst into a flame, providing water was not instantly applied to prevent or allay all friction.

It is at such a time as this, when by some slight accident the line gets "foul," or by the overturning of the boat, the warp becomes "tangled" up with the men, many a poor sailor has been carried out of the boat and carried down into the depths below, and never seen after. Such sad occurrences as these are not wholly unfamiliar with whalers.

As soon as the whale is struck, orders are given to "stern all," in order to get out of the way of his floes, or if he is disposed to be frantic and run, to give him the line. Sometimes the lines of several boats are bent on, and more than eight hundred fathoms are run out, and yet the whale would sink the boats, were not the line out. The force that can drag more than three thousand feet of whale warp through the water, including a whaleboat, and sometimes more than one, at the rate of ten, twelve and fourteen miles per hour, must be tremendous. Such is the locomotive energy of the whale. It is supposed that with equal ease he could swim off with a ship.

When, however, the whale becomes so exhausted, having been perhaps harpooned by some other boats, that the warp can be hauled in, and the boat or boats approach the whale again, the lancer, who is generally one of the mates of the ship, exchanges places with the boatsteerer, and takes his position at the bow of the boat, with a lance ten or twelve feet long: as soon as he comes near enough to reach him, he thrusts the slender and fatal steel into the very vitals of the animal: "blood mixed with water is discharged from the blow holes, and presently streams of blood alone are ejected, which frequently drench the boats and men, and cover the sea far around." Sometimes the last agony of the victim is marked by convulsive motions with the tail and violent contortions of his whole body; and, as we have seen, in its dying moments, turns its rage towards the author of its sufferings. The whale is now in his "durry;" he dashes hither and thither, snaps convulsively with his huge jaws, rolls over and over, coiling the line around his

body, or leaps completely out of the water. The boats are often upset broken into fragments, and the men wounded or drowned. The poor animal whirls rapidly around in unconsciousness, in a portion of a circle, rolls over on its side, and is still in death. At other times, after it is lanced, the whale yields up its life quietly, and dies with scarcely a struggle.

Besides harpoons, which are the most important instruments upon which whalers depend for capturing the whale, the Harpoon Gun and Bomb Lance are now used for the same purpose. They are not however considered as substitutes for the harpoon, except in cases of emergency, when the whale cannot be approached by a boat, or when he manifests ugliness or ferocity.

The Harpoon Gun designed to throw a harpoon, is but little used by American ships, though quite generally among English whalers. Nearly all of our ships, however, are supplied with the fatal and destructive Bomb Lance.

The gun into which the Lance exactly fits, is heavier—shorter, and its barrel larger than common guns. It is loaded with powder in the same manner as other guns. The Lance is then put into the barrel of the gun, until one end of it comes in contact with the charge of powder; the opposite extremity has three edges—sharp and tapering to a point. The entire length of the Lance is about eighteen inches.

The Lance is prepared with a hollow tube, extending half or two-thirds of the distance through it; and this tube is filled with a combustible material that readily ignites when the gun is fired.

When the Lance has buried itself in the huge body of the whale, the fire communicates with the explosive part of the filling in the tube, situated about in the centre of the Lance, and in a few moments, thirty seconds perhaps, it bursts like a bomb, and destroys the life of the whale.

The Bomb Lance may be fired with effect, at a whale, at a distance of about fifty yards or more.

"The huge body is now towed to the ship; a hole is cut into the blubber near the head, into which a strong hook is inserted; a difficult and dangerous operation. A strong tension is then applied to this hook, and by it the blubber is hoisted up as it is generally cut by the spades in a spiral strip, going round and round the body, the whale being secured long side of the ship and somewhat stretched by tackles both at the head and tail. As this strip or band of blubber is pulled off, weighing from one half to two tons, the body of course revolves, until the stripping reaches the 'small,' when it will turn no more."

The head, which at the commencement of the process was cut off and secured astern, is now hoisted into a perpendicular position, the front of the muzzle opened, and the oil dipped out of the case by a bucket at the end of a pole. A ship has no purchase sufficiently strong to hoist in on deck the head of a large sperm whale. It is so heavy that it would take the mast out of her if attempted; or bring her keel out of water. Besides, it is so bulky that it would more than fill up the entire waist of the ship. The head sometimes contains more than fifty barrels of oil.

After the oil has been dipped out of the "case," the "junk," is then cut into oblong pieces and taken in on deck; the remainder of the head, and carcass are then cut adrift. The oil is afterwards extracted from the blubber and junk, being cut into small pieces by the "mincing knife," and exposed to the action of fire in large pots, the skinny portions which remain, serving for fuel. It should be observed, that it is usual to secure the "junk" before dripping the oil from the "case." The "junk" which is the forward part of the head contains the purest spermaceti, and therefore more valuable on that account. It is deposited in the front part of the head in a solid mass, about the consistence of lard, and divided occasionally by a narrow layer of "white horse," a substance resembling the cords of animals only harder. After passing through a "cooler," the oil is conveyed through leathern hose to large stationary casks which constitute the bottom tier in the hold of the ship. When whales are plenty, which is the harvest time with whalers, they usually stow away one hundred barrels of oil in twenty four hours. At such times as these, the fires in the "try works" never go out. If whales were abundant, whalers would fill a ship carrying three thousand barrels, in less than two months.

## Whale Hunting and Shipwrecks Feature Men's Club Dinner.

Ex-Fire Chief Archie Cartwright, Nantucket's last whale hunter, was the principal speaker at the North Church Men's Club opening meeting of the season.

Archie's talk was on the lines of a one-man-gam. He took his listeners on his voyage aboard the "Sunbeam" out of New Bedford, in the year 1906, to the "western islands" in search of the elusive whale. The one-time Fire Chief said at the beginning he had no prepared speech but he had brought along some notes. These notes were better than any prepared speech. He gave not only exciting descriptions of the capture of the whale but told intimate details of life aboard the "Sunbeam" and anecdotes concerning many of his fellow crewmen.

His stories of life aboard were sprinkled lavishly with salty humor and, at times, with somewhat salty language which colored the whole in a delightful manner.

During his talk, Archie related an incident when two of the whale boats went after two whales. The first boat reached its whale first and, by a lucky drive, the harpooner hit a vital spot and the whale was killed on the first thrust. When this happened the other whale instantly disappeared and was never located again. The speaker said this made him think that there must be some way whales communicate with one another, especially in times of danger.

In the question period that followed, Lt. Commander T. C. Ondrechen, of the Tom Nevers Head Naval Facility, told about the Navy's recent studies of whales. This study was necessitated by the fact that so many naval planes and surface craft were mistaking whales for submarines. Commander Ondrechen said the Navy's studies proved the whale have a kind of built-in sonar device with which they communicate.

The Commander said this communication could be described as a kind of bark, not too unlike the bark of a dog. This bark can be heard for several miles and by this means the leader of a school of whales could keep track of the whole school. When the leader barks each whale answers and if the answers do not add up to the number of whales known to be in the school the leader begins to investigate.

Another very interesting part of the program was furnished by Mr. Robert Stark. He brought to the meeting a wire recording which he and Dr. Will Gardner made. This wire recording is supposed to be the first in a series which are to be made for posterity.

Will Gardner is the interviewer in the recording and he talks to some of the old-timers and pries out of them some interesting facts about old time Nantucket and the interview is preserved on tape through the generosity of Bob Stark.

The interview was with that old-timer Chester Pease. The subject was the wreck and salvaging of the "Vulcan" which stranded on the Bar on October 23rd, 1891. Chester gave a very exciting description of the saving of the crew with but little prompting from Will Gardner.

Bob Stark introduced the two men in the first part of the tape recording and said the interview had been edited and shortened. The last part of the tape was taken up with Mr. Pease's reminiscences of the tricks he and some of his contemporary salvagers used to get the better of the tug boat captains who were out for salvage cash.

The dinner which preceded the meeting was excellently prepared by a committee including Mrs. Priscilla Stanley, Mrs. Florence Vincent, Mrs. Bernice Foye, and Mrs. Irene Smith.

Oct. 22, 1955



From the Boston Transcript.

### Notes on Whales and Whaling.

History indicates the Basques or Biscayans as the first civilized race that equipped vessels for whaling expeditions. At first they contented themselves with seeking whales in the adjacent seas, but as the persecuted animals grew scarcer, the boldest of them sailed north and sought them in their own icy homes.

Gradually the Biscayans abandoned the pursuit. In 1735 they only sent out ten or twelve vessels, and nine years later, in 1744, abandoned altogether this branch of commerce, which they had been first to open.

#### EUROPEAN WHALE FLEETS.

In 1705, the Hamburg Greenland fleet consisted of sixty-five sails.

In 1768, Frederick the Great ordered whaling ships to be equipped at Sweden.

In 1774, the Swedish government gave a company at Gothenburg an exclusive privilege for twenty years.

In 1770, Denmark decided on appropriating to itself a portion of the profits which other nations had been so long acquiring on the coast of the Danish possessions in this pursuit.

In 1788, two hundred and twenty-two English vessels were engaged in the Northern whaling trade.

#### FOR SIX HUNDRED YEARS

the whale fishery was carried on by the Basques, Biscayans, Icelanders, and Norwegians, for the food yielded by the tongue and the oil obtained from the fat of the animal. It was not until the seventeenth century that the whale fishery engaged the maritime nations of Europe as an important branch of commerce.

#### WHALEBONE

entered into the commerce of the fifteenth century, and commanded the enormous price of £700 sterling a ton, exceeding a money value of the present time of \$10,000. With an ignorance of science which now is laughable even to our children, who know that the material for stays and hoops is taken from the mouth, the law in the time of Charles II, appropriated the tail of every whale taken by an English subject to the use of the queen, for the supply of the royal wardrobe.

#### EARLY VOYAGES.

In 1486, the Portuguese reached the "Cape of Storms," "the Lion of the Sea," and the "Head of Africa"—as sometimes called—but which in happy augury of an ultimate passage to India was at last given the less omened name of "Cape of Good Hope" by King John II. Immediately thereafter, the northern states of Europe, and particularly England and Holland, began that series of voyages not yet ended in search of an eastern passage through the floating fields and rolling mountains of ice in the Arctic Ocean. Their unsuccessful search disclosed the haunts of the whales in the bays and creeks of Spitzbergen.

In 1575 a London merchant wrote to a foreign correspondent for "advice and direction as to killing the whale," and received instructions how to build and equip a vessel of two hundred tons, and to man it exclusively with experienced whale hunters of Biscay. The English now claimed Spitzbergen and all its surrounding ice and waters as having been discovered in 1533 by Sir Hugh Willoughby, who, it will be remembered, was unfortunately entangled in the ice and froze to death on the coast of Lapland. He named it Greenland, supposing it a part of the Western continent. Under that supposition the Danes claimed the whole region, while the Dutch alleged an earlier exploration, and each of these nations sent armed forces upon the fishing ground, more to establish exclusive rights there than for the protection of their few fishermen. In 1618, a general engagement took place, in which the English were worsted. It took some fifty years to discover that it was absurd to claim jurisdiction where no permanent pos-

session could be established by reason of the rigor of the climate, and that there were whales enough and room enough for all competitors. Thenceforward the Arctic whale fishery has been open to all nations.

In 1598, Hull, England, equipped the first vessel from that port for the Greenland whale fishery.

In 1611, a society was formed at Amsterdam to commence whaling on the coasts of Nova Zembla and Spitzbergen. In 1661, the Dutch sent out one hundred and thirty-three (133) whalers, and between 1676 and 1782 five thousand eight hundred and eighty-six vessels left their ports, which captured during that time 32,907 whales, whose value may be estimated, at least, at \$100,000,000.

#### THE DUTCH

perfected the harpoon, the reel, the line, and the spear, as well as the art of using them; and with them originated the system of rewarding the officers and crews employed in the pursuit, not with direct wages, but with shares and lays, as they are technically termed in the spoils of the game, proportioned to skill and experience. They turned the fishery to good account, and in 1680 had 260 ships and 40,000 sailors engaged in it. They even founded a fishing settlement called Smeerenburgh, on the coast of Spitzbergen, within eleven degrees of the North Pole, and took whales in such abundance in its vicinity that ships were sent out in ballast to bring home the surplus oil and bone above the capacity of the whaling vessels. The whales, thus vigorously attacked, again changed their lurking place, and Spitzbergen was abandoned by the fishermen, so that the very site of Smeerenburgh is unknown.

#### THE PLAIN HARPOON

employed by the early whalers is still in use. There have been various modifications of its form, such as harpoons with one fluke, those with joints, others barbed, etc., etc.; but all these, after having had their day, have given way to the plain, primitive Dutch weapon. There have been curious machines constructed for shooting whales, and contrivances to blow the animal up, and recently attempts have been made to conquer him with an electric shock; but nothing yet has been fabricated that is at all comparable to a pair of nervous and dexterous arms, more especially if united to a stout heart. The difficulty seems to be in constructing a torpedo of sufficient force that will not incumber the boat by its size and weight.

#### WHALES IN AMERICAN WATERS.

In 1496 Sebastian Cabot, seeking a north-western passage to the Indies, discovered Newfoundland, and immediately the waters surrounding it were enlivened by the presence of the Basques, Biscayans, Dutch and English, in chase of the whale. In New England this animal was first sought by Captain John Smith of Pocahontas memory, on the coast of Maine. As early as 1614, or sixteen years before the settlement of Boston, an expedition was fitted out under his command "to take whales." He did not, however, meet with the success his enterprise deserved, for he says, "We found this whale-fishing: a costly conclusion. We saw many and spent much time in chasing of them, but could not kill any; they being a kind of Invanates and not the whale that yields the fins and oil as expected." Leaving his vessels, Smith with eight men ranged the coast from Penobscot to Cape Cod in a boat, and after his return published a chart and gave to the country thus explored the name of New England. The Invanates he could not catch were probably the fin-back, which is often seen on our coast, but from its little value, and because of its great speed, is never sought and seldom captured. We judge also from his remark touching the fins, that he supposed that they and not the mouth yielded the prized whale-

bone. Scarcely had the colonists of Massachusetts planted themselves at Plymouth before its bleak and rigorous climate and rough and sterile soil forced them to resort to the sea to eke out their subsistence. The first person that is recorded to have killed a whale among the people of New England is one Wm. Hamilton, somewhere between 1660 and 1670.

#### NANTUCKET.

In 1672, as it appears on the town records of Nantucket, an agreement was entered into

between James Loper, and the settlers there, "to carry on a design of whale fishery." The municipality and Loper became a joint monopoly for the pursuit of the whale fishery. The agreement insured to Loper one-third of the profits, ten acres of land, and commonage for two cows, twenty sheep and one horse, with necessary wood and water. A fine of five shillings for each whale killed was imposed upon all persons infringing the monopoly. Such an assumption and grant by a small village was certainly in contradiction of the character of the colony of Rhode Island, if not of Massachusetts. Holland had at this time about 200 whaling ships, England, 100. The latter paid six shilling a ton bounty on oil taken by her own fishermen, and was favorable to the pursuit in her own colonies, oil being in much demand.

Feb. 22, 1873 →

MODERN NANTUCKET.—There is a *bon-homme*, a fund of easy, quiet, good nature about Nantucket, says a correspondent of the New York Times, which is most winning. If "Nantucket people are peculiar people," they are getting accustomed to the influx of strangers. Wonderful old men, octogenarians, walk hale and hearty about the streets, and crack jokes which have a certain fresh-salty flavor. It delighted me to hear: "About 1815, when I went out humpbacking, and ended by privateering;" or "How when I was first mate in 1820—I was master in '23—we struck a sperm whale in the Sea of Okosh, and by George, sir, (I think it was George) we took a lump of amber-grease from out of her that went to London, and was sold for a thousand pounds." Grand old fellows are they, who love to bask in the sun, and gossip and spin wondrous yarns. Of course, there is a dearth of the younger male element. An adolescent Nantucket man tears up his anchor, and drifts off into the world. Some of the men never come back; still many whose life-cruises are over, float back bewrecked, with empty hatches, and others who sail homeward in argosies, freighted gunnel deep with gold, make once more old Nantucket their last port of haven.

It was the bark Oak which, in 1869, made the last whaling cruise out of Nantucket. When she steered boldly from Sankoty light, her keel wrote on the lapping wave "finis" to the Nantucket whaling business. Since her time no more whaling ventures have been made, or, perhaps, ever will be made. A new light has dawned in Nantucket. We needs must not smile at it. It may be a flickering ray as yet, but still it glimmers. The wharves once redolent with oil, where bustled throngs of sailors, and Kanakas coming from and going on a forty-four months' cruise, are now trodden by tourists, and jaunty young men and dainty young women take their farings on the slips. Genteel Nantucket may have had a bitter pill to swallow, but at least she has *volens volens*, gulped down her pride, for now it is almost certain that in time to come she will be a famous watering-place.

The speech here attributed to the old whaleman is somewhat mixed, and contains a grave anachronism. The Sea of Okotsk was not visited by whalers until so recently as 1848; and certainly a sperm whale in that sea would be very much out of his reckoning.

Oct. 10, 1874



## Whale Fishing.

### Some Facts Regarding this Once Enormous Industry.

An attempt at an essay upon this subject would be the opening of a chapter full of romance, of adventure, and, indeed, a history of the nursery of our national and merchant marine. To those whose early associations connect them with this branch of commercial industry, that has occupied so prominent a place in the mercantile world, the romance of the whaler's life becomes strangely and yet pleasantly mingled with the common-place vocation that has given our country multitudes of her most efficient sailors, and our navy many of its most accomplished and patriotic officers, as well as contributed so largely to the commerce of the world.

The leviathan of the deep has contributed more material than many people are aware to the prosperity of communities, as well as furnished symbols for poets, and even mention in the Scriptures. Although in his native element he has ever been regarded as monarch of the deep, yet to the ancients he was but the servant of the venerable Neptune. In modern times, though surrounded with all the glories of mythological and scriptural dignity, in his material existence he has been the promoter of countless blessings to thousands of mortals; and it does seem in a degree sacrilegious to divest him of his historic and poetic surroundings, and in his matter-of-fact existence consider him as a tangible contributor to the comfort and enjoyment, as well as the wealth and progress, of a large portion of the human family. The whale has been for many a year a contributor to the necessities and conveniences of mankind in more senses than one, and we propose to deal with the great monster in a purely practical point of view, although in our dreams the mythological Neptune may take us to task for thus disregarding the poetic associations of our younger days, and invading his domains with the whaleboat, harpoon, lance, try-pot, candle-factory, ivory-works and hoop-skirt maker of our degenerate day and generation. The whale has furnished the means of support to all these branches of trade, and it seems to us that in future years, as the necessities of mankind increase, so will the demand upon his resources grow greater in equal proportion.

To the Nantucketer falls the glory or the crime of invading the sacred realms of Neptune, and turning an honest penny in killing whales. Everything has a beginning. The first whale was killed in the harbor of Nantucket in 1672, and from that moment there was attached to the slaughter of the leviathan such a romance that it is said the maidens of the island made the killing of a whale the test of manhood that would entitle a gallant of the time to their consideration. The business soon increased, and the people began to extend their voyages from the Shoals, the Western Islands and Newfoundland, to periods of from six months to four years, which gave the vocation a magnitude and degree of stability that rendered it a matter of world-wide import; and for many years the "right-whale" fishery continued with a great degree of profit. Soon, however, the value of the sperm whale began to be appreciated, and after the killing of the first of the species in 1712, the business opened, and sperm oil took precedence over the right whale, and so continued for many years. The honor of killing and capturing the first sperm whale belongs to a resident of Nantucket named Christopher Hussey. The first ship that sailed from Nantucket for the Pacific ocean on a whaling voyage was in 1791, although as early as 1746, ships were sent as far as Davis' Straits, and in 1774, to the Coast of Brazil. And history records that "at the time of the breaking out of the war of the Revolution there were 150 vessels belonging to Nantucket engaged in the whaling business, and that after its close, the flag of the new republic was first seen in the river Thames flying at the mast-head of a Nantucket ship."

The pursuit of the whale produced a hardy set of seamen, most of whom were native and to the manner born, and who ever maintained a degree of pride that animated them all, from the fore-castle to the quarter-deck, to perfect themselves in every detail of seamanship. Perfection was their ambition, which was only equalled by their ardor in the execution of the mechanical branch of their vocation. And even to-day, the most accomplished officers in our merchant marine refer with pride to their personal experience on a Nantucket whaler, or their pedigree as a descendant from that stock of whaling captains. Our navy record shows an array of gallantry from the school of Nantucket seamanship that reflects credit and high honor upon both the graduate and the alma mater under whose benediction he exists.

In view of the prominence that the whale-fishery has occupied in the commercial world, it may be well to remark that the first license to carry on the business was obtained in 1672 by a citizen of the island, by which he was permitted to carry on the business on payment of five shillings for each whale caught. (At that time the whales were so plenty that they were caught by the boats going out from the shore). In the year 1880 there were about eighty thousand and seamen engaged in the business. Since that time the business has passed through many variations and vicissitudes; and before we regard the future of this branch of business, it may be well to revert to a statistical retrospect.

We find that from 1815 to November 16, 1869, 946 voyages were made, of which 855 were made by ships, 42 by brigs and 49 by schooners. Sixteen ships each landed 3,000 barrels and over: one landed 3,450, and one 6,000 barrels. An aggregate of 171 voyages shows an average of over 2,000 barrels; 16 of 2,500 barrels; 21 of 2,600 barrels; 9 of 2,700 barrels; 3 of 2,900 barrels.

During fifty-five years in which the business was prosecuted, 181 different ships, 21 brigs, and 14 schooners were employed. The largest number of vessels employed at any time was 111 ships, 7 brigs and 3 schooners. The cost of an outfit for a ship of from 300 to 400 tons in 1835 was about \$40,000—of which the ship may be fairly estimated at \$22,000—outfit, \$18,000. This was for a four years' voyage. Since that period the cost for an outfit has reached as high as \$60,000, and even \$75,000.

The ships that sailed from Nantucket in 1832 landed the largest quantity of oil, 46,038 barrels of sperm oil, and 13,490 of whale; and the ships that sailed from Nantucket the last nine years of the active prosecution of the business, from 1861 to 1869, landed 7,328 barrels of sperm oil, and 1,800 barrels of whale oil.

In 1840, there sailed from New Bedford 103 ships; Nantucket, 79; Fair Haven, 17; Sag Harbor, 12; Warren, 6; Falmouth, 4; Newport, 7; Bristol, 5; Edgartown, 5; Dartmouth, 4; Poughkeepsie, 4; Wilmington, 3; Salem, 3; Stonington, 2; New London, 2; Hudson, 2; Newburyport, 1; Portsmouth, 1; Greenport, 1; Dorchester, 1; Portland, 1; Wiscasset, 1. This is as truthful a statement as we can obtain from statistics, but we believe that the figures for Nantucket and New Bedford are inaccurate. In 1844, the tonnage for Nantucket was 27,230, and in 1859, 12,234, of which 10,297 was engaged in whaling. In 1855, the receipts of sperm oil were 175,700 gallons, valued at \$251,572; of whale oil, 261,739 gallons, valued at \$146,049; of whalebone, 81,752 pounds, valued at \$32,306. In 1853, there were but forty-four vessels employed, with a tonnage of 14,266, and a capital of \$1,422,600.

In this connection it may be well to record the amount of importations of sperm oil into the United States for the years 1835, 1836, 1837, 1838 and 1839, with the same estimated at average prices. These rates are carefully arranged, and may be regarded as nearly accurate as can be digested.

1835. Prices—February, 77 cents; March, 78 cents; April, 80 cents; May, 85 cents; November, 92 cents. The importations amounted to 162,683 barrels, at 84 cents per gallon, and were valued at \$4,569,192 18.

1836. Prices—March, 86 cents; April, 88 cents; October, 95 cents; November, 92 cents; December, 88 cents. 130,998 barrels were imported, at an average value of 88 cents per gallon, showing for the year, \$3,621,264 56.

1837. In January the rates were for sperm oil, 90 cents per gallon; February, 90 cents; March, 90 cents; June, 89 cents; August, 75 cents; September, 77 cents; November, 79 cents; December, 81 cents. During the year 181,724 barrels were imported, at an average of 82 cents per gallon, or \$4,693,930 92.

In 1838 the price of sperm oil reached 80 cents in February; March, 77 cents; April, 78 cents; May, 78 cents; June, 78 cents; July, 82 cents; August, 80 cents; September, 85 to 91 cents; October, 93 cents; November, 97 cents per gallon. During the year 131,856 barrels were imported, at an average price of 85 cents per gallon, or in the total of \$3,529,785.

In 1839 there were imported 136,500 barrels, at an average price of \$1.05 per gallon.

In 1840 the tonnage employed amounted to 137,000 tons. The number of vessels engaged in the whale fishery from the United States, on January 1, 1876, was 123 ships, 7 brigs and 39 schooners, representing a tonnage of 38,883. Of these 169 vessels, 137 were at sea.

The products of the whale fishery were an importation in 1851 of 99,591 barrels of sperm oil, 382,483 barrels of whale oil, and 3,966,500 pounds of bone; in 1853, 103,077 barrels of sperm oil, 260,114 barrels of whale oil, 5,652,300 pounds of bone; in 1863, 78,718 barrels of sperm oil, 140,005 barrels of whale oil, 1,337,660 pounds of bone; in 1870, 55,188 barrels of sperm oil, 72,691 barrels of whale oil, 708,365 pounds of bone; in 1875, 42,617 barrels of sperm oil, 34,594 barrels of whale oil, 372,303 pounds of bone.

The importation of sperm oil reached its highest figure in 1853, and whale oil in 1851.

The value of the product of the whale fishery during the year ending June 30, 1875, was \$2,841,002.

It is an interesting, as well as a remarkable fact, that during the period between the years 1815 and 1869, but 210 deaths occurred on board of whale ships; and it is shown that during that period the total amount of oil obtained reached 1,105,121 barrels of sperm, and 253,164 barrels of whale oil, or a total of 1,358,285 barrels.

With the rapid introduction of machinery and the increasing development of the country, the demand for oil must correspondingly increase; and it further appears that from her natural position San Francisco is destined to be chief centre of the oil trade of the country at no distant date. This statement of facts and statistical review it is hoped will prompt our capitalists to give the matter that consideration it merits. Indeed, it is a matter that requires immediate attention, inasmuch as by the completion of the Northern Railroad to the Pacific Coast, some town upon the coast near Puget Sound will spring up that in this important branch of industry will surely give us competition.—T. B. Gardner in *San Francisco Morning Call*.

## JULY 12, 1879.

### Our Old Occupation.

The perusal of the Thirty-fifth Annual Report of the Whale Fishery, published in the *New Bedford Shipping List*, briefly noticed last week, awakens some old reminiscences and suggests curious comparisons between the condition of this branch of industry at the present day, and the flourishing state of things which existed only twenty-five years ago, when whaling had reached its zenith, and seven hundred vessels under the American flag were profitably employed in its pursuit.

In the Annual Review of one year ago, it appeared that the number of vessels had increased during the year 1877, and it was hoped that circumstances might warrant still further additions. But it now appears that the increase has been attended with loss, as the average catch has been sensibly reduced, showing that the several sperm whaling grounds, where the additional vessels were sent, are being worked more than they will bear. The increasing scarcity of whales is not followed by any corresponding rise in the price of oil, but on the contrary the figures touched during the year 1878 have been at times so low as to be ruinous. Very little sperm or whale oil is now employed for illuminating purposes, as much better and cheaper substitutes have come in to supersede it. Most of the ships arriving have taken too little oil to save their fortunes, even had it been much higher in price, while even the few that have made a so-called good voyage have netted but small profit for their owners.

The fact that the great sperm whaling-grounds near the coasts of Chili and Peru, the off-shore grounds and other favorite haunts in the Pacific, whose treasures seemed inexhaustible, have failed entirely, yielding no returns to even a mere handful of vessels, indicates that the whale is an animal of slow growth, and slow rate of increase. The best work among sperm whales is now done in high latitudes, both in the North Atlantic and in the vicinity of the Patagonian coast and Cape Horn. Of course whaling in such localities involves increased difficulties and dangers by reason of boisterous weather and heavy gales. Those pleasant voyages in tropical seas are among the things of the past, as they can no longer be made profitable.

But the low price for oil appears to be partially offset and balanced by the remarkable demand for whalebone, a substance so peculiar that there is no substitute for it, either in the realm of nature or of art. It has been converted to many uses in the manufacture of a great variety of high-priced articles, and this strange, dingy-looking stuff, which within our own memory was hardly considered worth the space it occupied in the ship's hold, and which was wont to lie in the store house begging for a purchaser at a nominal price, is now valued at more than three dollars a pound. It has indeed become the leading factor in making up the voyage, so that instead of a cargo of oil and bone, we may talk of a cargo of bone and oil. The old order of things appears strangely reversed when black oil with its whalebone is worth a great deal more money than spermaceti, barrel for barrel.

This important change in market values will be a great inducement to continue the fishery among the polar whales in the Arctic, where the season just past has been a successful one. Only a single ship has been wrecked, and the rest of the fleet have averaged 850 barrels of oil and 7000 pounds of whalebone. A large portion of the oil obtained by them has been sold on the Pacific coast, this course being considered more profitable than to bring or send it home. The Southern right-whaling grounds, which have been little visited of late, may now be worked over again. The Antarctic seas are less known than the Arctic, and the exploration in the higher latitudes has never been complete. So far as researches have been made beyond the parallel of 60°, we do not learn that either right-whales or bow-heads have been met with, the latter species, as well as the walrus, being peculiar to the Arctic seas. But sperm whales were found in the highest Southern latitudes of large size and easy of capture. The great drawback to success in these regions lies in the severe and boisterous weather, which not only interferes with the pursuit of whales, but makes it nearly impossible to secure the prize after it is killed.

It is not improbable that more attention may be given to the Greenland and Hudson's Bay whaling grounds, and also over on the Spitzbergen side, where it is reported that whales have lately been seen in vast numbers. The ground has seldom been visited by American ships, though the Dutch and the English formerly did a good business there. Nearly all that is being done, and we may say nearly all that is likely to be done for the future of the business, must be the work of the enterprising merchants of New Bedford, for we have ceased to cherish even a lingering hope that the whale fishery might be revived here. We can never cease, while any of the present generation remain, to feel a deep interest in the success and prosperity of that city which was once our rival in our prosperous days, and having outstripped and outlived us, may be not inaptly compared to a child which has grown up and taken the work from the hands of the superannated parent. In respect to our old occupation, even our great successor has now passed her prime and is in the downhill of life, but we rejoice in every sign or symptom of the old vitality, and hope it may yet be many years ere the whaling fleet of New Bedford shall become, like our own, a vision of the past, furnishing only a stock of tender reminiscences to garrulous old fellows like ourselves.

## Inquirer and Mirror.

### NANTUCKET.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 1879.



## Incidents in the History of American Whaling.

When Richard Mather came to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1635 he saw off the coast "mighty whales spewing up water in the air like the smoke of a chimney. Of such incredible bigness that I will never wonder that the body of Jonah could be in the belly of a whale." Already others had noted the presence of the creatures that so impressed Mather, for among the earliest settlers were men who, if they were not whalers, knew of whaling and its rich rewards. Walter S. Tower of the University of Pennsylvania in a monograph on the history of American whale fishing, published by the university, gives it as his opinion that the pursuit of the whale began almost with the settlement of the New England colonies. As early as 1662 the town of Eastham voted that a part of every whale cast ashore should be devoted to the support of the minister. In 1688 Secretary Randolph wrote to England that "New Plymouth Colony have great profit by whale killing," and in the same year it was ordained that each company's lances and harpoons should be marked with a public mark. In 1647 the General Court at Hartford granted a monopoly of whaling in Connecticut to one Whiting, whose venture apparently amounted to little. Mr. Tower believes that the first organized prosecution of the industry by Americans was by the settlers on the eastern end of Long Island. He says: "Howell states that the town of Southampton, on the southern shore of Long Island, was founded, in 1640 as an offshoot from the colony at Lynn, Mass., and that almost from the very first the settlers recognized the possibilities of deriving revenue from the taking of whales. Accordingly, in 1644, the town was divided into four wards of eleven persons each, whose duty it was to attend to all drift whales cast ashore in their ward. Whenever a whale was secured, it was customary to select by lot two persons from each ward to cut it up. Every inhabitant was to share equally in the division, except the cutters, who had a double portion for their labor. This cooperative industry may be regarded as the direct ancestor of the famous system of a 'lay' or share of the catch in vogue over a century later."

Soon the settlers began to pursue whales in boats, the records showing that this form of fishing was practised as early as 1650. So important did the industry become that every man in Southampton was obliged to take a turn at watching for whales from a high lookout. The whalers made New England towns their trading points, to the detriment of New York, with the result that in 1684 an act was passed laying a duty on oil and bone exported to any outside ports except in England or the West Indies. This act produced no appreciable effect.

The Long Islanders had the start of all other organized whalers except those of Nantucket, but they did not maintain their prestige. The other coast dwellers were apparently content with the whales that came ashore, except in Nantucket, where, as Mr. Tower says:

"The conditions were quite different. To quote from Macy, the historian of the island, the first whaling expedition in Nantucket was undertaken by some of the original purchasers of the island, the circumstances of which are handed down by tradition, and are as follows: A whale of the kind called 'scragg' came into the harbor and continued there three days. This excited the curiosity of the people and led them to devise measures to prevent his return out of the harbor. They accordingly invented and caused to be wrought for them a harpoon with which they attacked and killed the whale. This first success encouraged them to undertake whaling as a permanent business, whales being at that time numerous in the vicinity of the shores."

According to the same authority, in 1690 a prophetic Nantucket man, standing with several others on a hill overlooking the sea, declared as he pointed to the waters: "There is a green pasture where our children's grandchildren will go for bread." In the same year Ichabod Paddock of Cape Cod was employed to instruct Nantucket in the arts of killing and trying out. In the early part of the eighteenth century Nantucket took the lead in whaling enterprise, a preeminence the island maintained until outstripped by New Bedford in the second decade of the nineteenth century. The barrenness of the island, the abundance of whales and the instincts of the people combined to make them whalers:

"The year 1712 was epoch making in the history of whaling. In that year a Nantucket whaler, named Christopher Hussey, while cruising along the coast, was blown out to sea by a strong northerly wind. In the course of his involuntary voyage he came across a number of sperm whales, and killing one, brought it home with him, the first sperm whale known to have been taken by American whalers."

The Nantucket fishers began at once to put out vessels for the sperm whale fisheries. Sperm oil had been introduced by Hussey, and the whalers extended their voyages gradually until they penetrated every sea of the globe. Mr. Tower recalls a local tradition to the effect that the first Nantucket whaleship to cross the line arrived home on the day the battle of Lexington was fought. When the Revolution began Nantucket had the most important fisheries in the Colonies. In 1775 the port had 150 vessels, some of them large brigs, in the industry. Along the Cape and generally on the Massachusetts coast the fishing was followed, bringing prosperity to many towns. New Bedford did not appear as a fishing port until the middle of the century, and then not as a rival of the happy island of Nantucket. There every resident was engaged in the trade. Macy says:

"Many branches of labor were conducted by those who were immediately interested in the voyages. The young men, with few exceptions, were brought up to some trade necessary to the business. The ropemaker, the cooper, the blacksmith, the carpenter, in fine, the workmen were either the ship-owners or their households; so were often the officers and men who navigated the vessels and killed the whales. While a ship was at sea, the

owners at home were busily employed in the manufacture of casks, iron work, cordage, blocks and other articles for the succeeding voyage. Thus the profits of the labor were enjoyed by those interested in the fishery, and voyages were rendered advantageous, even when the oil obtained was barely sufficient to pay for the outfits, estimating the labor as part thereof. This mode of conducting the business was universal."

The Revolution stopped the whaling business except from Nantucket, whose people, indeed, had no choice but to pursue it or desert their homes. So deplorable did their situation become that in 1781 the British Admiral at New York granted permission to the islanders to send out twenty-four vessels which the British cruisers had orders not to molest. Protected from these enemies, some of the whalers fell prey to American privateers, which took them to ports in which they were liberated when the authorities learned their stories. When the war began, Nantucket had 150 vessels. At its close two or three hulks remained. For thirty years, the upbuilding of the industry was slow and marked by many set-backs. Then the second war with England gave it another staggering blow. How serious this was is shown by the records of imports of whale products for what Mr. Tower calls two representative years.

In 1811, 844,200 gallons of sperm oil, 304,825 gallons of whale oil, 43,200 pounds of bone.

In 1815, 48,510 gallons of sperm oil; 4,347 gallons of whale oil.

In the period between the close of the Revolution and the beginning of the War of 1812, whalers had set forth from Hudson, Poughkeepsie, New York, and the Long Island towns in this State. This was stopped by the new conflict.

After the end of hostilities, the whaling industry revived with wonderful vigor, and entered on what Mr. Tower calls its "golden era." From 562 in 1814, the tonnage rose to 233,262 in 1846. It furnished employment to scores of thousands, competences to thousands and riches to hundreds.

Then came the expansion of the mineral oil production, causing sperm oil to drop from \$1.36½ a gallon in 1859 to 46 cents in 1905. The whales ceased to be plentiful, the profits were reduced, new and safer opportunities for the investment of capital were opened.

Whaling ceased to be an industry of the first importance. In 1871, the Arctic fleet of thirty-one vessels was destroyed, insurance rates were increased and it became apparent that whaling was on the decline. In 1906 the aggregate tonnage of vessels engaged in it was 9,878, and the demand for whalebone alone maintains the industry.—N. Y. Sun.

## Old Whaling Glories.

*From the Springfield Republican.*

An article in the files of The Republican of 100 years ago gives a contemporary view of that period when New England's whaling ships traversed the oceans of the world, manned by a hardy and adventurous Yankee breed. It was then estimated that 10,000 sailors were aboard the 392 whaling craft, nearly all from New England ports, then roamed the seas. But in 1833, the whaling industry had by no means reached its peak, which did not come until 20 years later. The number of craft engaged had then almost doubled.

In 1833, according to an article reprinted from the "N. A. Review", New Bedford was the greatest of all whaling ports and it remained until the industry died. From that port 184 whaleships were afloat. Nantucket was second with 93 ships, Edgartown, Falmouth and Fall River together had 12, New London, 37; Sag Harbor, 24; Bristol, Warren and Newport, R. I., 31; New York, Hudson, Poughkeepsie and Newburg, 21, and ports north of Cape Cod, Plymouth, Salem, Newburyport and Portsmouth, 10.

When in the eighteen-fifties the decline of the whaling industry began for many causes, including the increasing production of mineral oils, many of the famous old ports lost their distinction. By 1876 there were reported only 169 whaling craft in the business and of these 116 ships, barks, brigs and schooners, belonging to New Bedford. Nantucket had disappeared entirely from the whaling map, and so almost had New London.

SETTLED THE VOYAGE.—The parties interested in the recent whaling expeditions from Tuckernuck have had some difficulty in arriving at a final settlement of the voyage, Capt. Clisby and Mr. George E. Coffin having put in a claim for a larger percentage of the net proceeds than the rest were willing to allow, and on Tuesday, after considerable discussion, the matter was left to Capt. Henry R. Plaskett and Mr. R. B. Hussey, as referees, who called in the advice of Capt. George H. Brock. A sealed decision was rendered the next morning, with the provision that it should not be opened until all the parties at interest had given their consent in writing to abide by the referee's decision. This step was taken for the reason that some of those interested had been absent when it was decided to place the case in the hands of referees. The seal was broken Thursday forenoon, and the award was made as follows: Capt. Clisby, one extra share; Mr. Coffin, ½ share extra; J. B. Macy, for services, \$25; Samuel C. Crawford, use of whaleboat, \$30. The net proceeds of the "voyage" is variously estimated at from \$2200 to \$2400. The latter amount is probably very nearly correct.

June 12, 1886

Nov. 2, 1907



## Nevins Tells Some True "Whaling" Yarns.

Editor of The Inquirer and Mirror:

You certainly should feel proud of your souvenir number. Everybody else does, and they treasure it, as well they might.

I notice Macy discovered an error. You can't beat him. And I've been waiting for your issue of the 21st, to see if someone hadn't discovered an "omission" in your "Last Whales" stories. I notice that no one has said anything about it, and for a time I have wondered if I dreamed that there was another whale tried out at the wharf around '70. Then I thought of an incident in connection with it that seems to have settled all doubts.

No, sir, I couldn't forget that whale if I tried. Alex. Dunham and "Stee Ray" (Stephen Reyes) towed him in. He was stripped of his blubber by Captain Obed Swain and crew, on board the bark Amy, which lay in the slip between Perry's coal T and the outer T of the wharf. The bark was headed to the westward, and the whale lay between the vessel and the wharf. I have a picture somewhere, I am sure, of the whale and Captain Obed as he stood on the planks over the port side, with a rope about his waist, whale-spear in hand. Tom Nickerson, whom, I think, is still living was at work with a whale-spade on the carcass.

I was very young and it was my first experience as a truant. In fact, I didn't go home to dinner, but sat on the cap-log of the wharf until the men returned from their noon-day meal. I asked Nickerson, who knew who I was, to give me some whale-scrap, as I had seen the larger boys, who lived under the bank, eating some the night before. He gave me three, each about the size of an average man's hand. I ate one and was saving the other two for the morning, to take to school; but here an error of judgment crept in which threw my plans all askew and created a scene which is indelibly fixed in my memory.

I don't know that I carry any scars of that affair, and if I did 't would be extremely difficult to single them out from the many that I possess from the same source. At all events, my sainted mother put me to bed on the night in question, and all would have been well if I hadn't asked her to hand me my pants, as she was about to leave (being afraid someone might discover my delicacies). There was an argument about the request, but she finally lifted them from the chair, intending to hand them to me.

They were heavy, no doubt, for, setting the little brass lamp down, she quickly put her hand into the pocket and more quickly withdrew it, at the same time issuing a "hurry call" to my father, who was asleep, after supper, on the kitchen couch. I've often thought it was a shame that he didn't have eight flights to climb instead of one. There might have been some chance of his being winded. As it was, he was in perfect trim, and he rushed into the room. My mother threw him my pants and he emptied the contents of both pockets on the floor (expecting, evidently, to discover tobacco).

And such a sight! The oil from the scraps had saturated the pockets, coming through to the outer surface. My mother was too disgusted to do anything except stand guard at the closed door. My father had his boots off and his whip was out in the barn, which seemed to be his chief lament as he chased me over and under the beds, occasionally "landing." Do you wonder, Mr. Editor, that this whale seems fresh in my memory?

When I read your "last whales" stories, I looked for an account of the one tried out aboard the Amy, and when I didn't discover it, I tried to convince myself that the one tried out on board the Abbie Bradford was the one. But this couldn't be so, as the Abbie lay at the extreme upper end of Straight wharf, on the south side.

Ten years later, surely, while I was an apprentice in The Inquirer and Mirror office, about 4 o'clock one stormy afternoon, while Clark was looking for the steamer, he reported a vessel bottom up near the Cross Rip lightship. On account of the storm early in the day, the steamer did not return. The report of the overturned vessel spread rapidly, and as soon as our day's work was over (6 o'clock), Herbert Parker, also of the Mirror office, and myself, ran down to Steamboat wharf. There were several boatmen in the vicinity of Captain Adams' boat house, but, as night was fast approaching, and the weather looked bad, no one made any attempt to go out in the sound.

Herbert was part owner of the whale-boat "Wonoma," Capt. Wallace Brown, and we soon had five boys together, ready to go. Everett Swain was one, but I cannot recall the other two. Capt. "Johnny" Freeman steered us. It started to rain before we reached Brant point, and by the time we crossed the bar we were drenched. Soon after we lost sight of the bug light over near Burgess' Pines, and Brant point light was getting more dim with each stroke of the oars. The lightship was showing up nicely over our right shoulders.

When about a mile and a half to the eastward of the lightship, we came up with the object of our search. We lay on our oars for a minute—the first time since leaving the wharf—but in the darkness could not make out just what we had found, as it rose and fell in the long easterly sea. Finally we rowed around to the leeward of it, and the odor settled all doubt. 'Twas a whale that has been killed, had gone to the bottom, and had arisen to the surface. His tongue was "blasted," and rose high and large above the top of the carcass.

We soon rowed out from under his lee, and Capt. "Johnny" suggested we lay by until morning, when we might secure some rope from the lightship and tow him in. There was danger of a mutiny right away, and our captain decided to abandon our find and start for home. We were without food or water, and our strength was about gone, with fully twelve miles of water to cover.

We arrived at the wharf at midnight. During the early morning a breeze sprang up from the northwest and drove the carcass ashore at Capaum pond, where George Robinson secured it. He sold it, as it lay upon the beach, to Cape Cod parties, who

towed it to Chatham. It was reported, and, in fact, it was published in the Barnstable Patriot, and copied in the Mirror, that a small quantity of a substance resembling ambergris was found in the process of trying out the carcass, which was sold to New York parties for \$3800. Maybe we weren't sick when we saw those figures.

I haven't been in 'Sconset for more than twenty-five years. I read every line of the 'Sconset story, however, and am not surprised at the changes and the growth of the village. It is as near being a perfect watering place as any I have ever seen or heard of.

S. J. Nevins.

Brookline, Dec. 23.

DECEMBER 28, 1912

## Where Old-Time Nantucket Whalemen Worshipped.

From the Boston Transcript.

In a little seaport town in South Wales, settled by Nantucket whaling folk who came back to the mother country after the Revolution, when their business fell into decay in Massachusetts, a tiny chapel, which was old when the Nantucket folk arrived is being restored, with the help of Americans and British of today.

Centuries before, the hardy Norsemen had plied their galleys on the self-same waters, but it was in the twelfth century that devout souls raised this House of prayer. To this hallowed spot the sailors would come, immediately on reaching land, to offer their thanksgiving for "perils past and for mercies given."

This church was one of several situated on either side of the Haven which were known as "Beacon" chapels, and probably served as "guides" to the ships coming into the harbor. It is the only one left.

The town of Milford Haven, in Pembrokeshire, and the chapel at St. Thomas's named after St. Thomas a Becket. It was erected in 1180 and was formerly attached to the old Pill Priory, of which the only remnant is the ruined choir arch. Milford Haven's harbor has been used by seamen since earliest times, and the little chapel was built for their use. Shakespeare mentions Milford Haven in "Cymbeline," Act 3, Scene 2.

At the time of the Dissolution of Religious Houses 1536-9 the little shrine fell on evil times, and has fallen into decay. No voice of prayer has been heard within its walls for the last 400 years. It has been used as a cart shed and even a pigsty, but even in its ruins, it is a fine specimen of the builder's art of the period. The vaulted roof of nave and chancel is still intact, but the west wall has fallen in, each succeeding winter of storm and tempest imperilling its existence. The chapel is scheduled with the Ancient Monuments Department of the Board of Works. Recently it and its site have been brought by the Vicar of the local church, St. Katharine's, the Rev. Cannon Edmund J. Howells, B. D., Rural Dean, Cannon of St. David's Cathedral, and he is hoping to receive restoration funds.

The plan of Milford Haven is on American lines. The bones of the old Nantucket Whalers rest in a quiet burial ground in Milford Haven. If their spirits haunt the spot where they began to build what is now a fairly large town, they would surely rejoice in the finished thing, and would further rejoice to know that their memory is to be perpetuated in the restoration of the old church upon which their eyes rested.

Note—On reading the above, many of our readers will doubtless wonder what Nantucket whalers were doing over in Wales. It was along about 1785 that England was making advances to encourage the whale fishery within its own dominions. In order to draw the whalers from the United States they fixed upon Halifax as the most eligible place for that purpose. There was an excellent harbor, in or out of which vessels of any draft could pass, summer or winter, and it was reported that a good market could be found there for the oil.

The English government held out such alluring prospects to such of the people of Nantucket who would remove thither and pursue the whaling business that a considerable number were induced to try the experiment and in 1786 and 1787 they settled on the shore opposite the town of Halifax and there built dwelling houses, candle-works, stores, etc., calling the place Dartmouth.

For several years thereafter the Nantucketers reaped the benefits of advantages which England held out to them and prospered. Then some of the promoters grew uneasy and on learning that prospects of even greater advantage were held out to them, they removed to Milford Haven, in the west of England, there to establish and prosecute the whale fishery. This resulted in the little settlement at Dartmouth finally breaking up.

A number of Nantucket families moved to England, carrying their property with them, and the town of Milford Haven soon thrived, the whaling business being carried on there extensively for many years.

This explains how the little seaport town in Wales happened to be settled by Nantucketers, as referred to in the above article from the Transcript.—Ed.]



Written for the Nantucket Journal.  
Reminiscences of an Old Whaler.  
NUMBER FIVE.

SO. BOSTON, Jan. 10th, 1882.

The old man told the mate to bring up his quadrant to get the sun and told the 2d mate (he too has been dead a good many years) to get the moon. I was sitting on the cooper's horse by the vice bench, shaving out some iron poles. The old man came along and said: "Where did you get those iron poles?" I told him they were some I bought when we were at the Ladrões. He asked me what I paid for them. I told him I hired one of the natives to cut me a dozen for which I paid him 4 pounds of tobacco, 2 bars of yellow soap, and a dozen of pipes. The old man smiled and said: "You seem to be flush with your tobacco. How much did you bring out from home?" I told him 110 pounds. Then he said, "We are only twenty-four months out and it may be twenty-four more before we get back, so that by that time you may want some if you don't look sharp. I have some down in the run and you may need some of it, but you must pay me my price for it."

He started to go aft and when he got as far as the booby hatch he turned round and calling me by name, said: "Come aft here." When I got there, he said: "Can you tell me what time it is in Greenwich?" I told him I could if he would let me look at the chronometer. He said, "go down in the cabin and get up on the transom, but don't touch anything for she's open." He followed me down, took his slate and pencil and said: "Now, tell me what's the Greenwich time?" I replied, "it's half past 3, A. M." "That's just the answer I expected," said he, "but it's not the one I wanted, and if you can't give me a correct answer I'll call the cook, so look again." Then I answered, "3.30-30 A. M." "That sounds more like land," said he. "I'll go up and get some sights and when I sing out, 'are you ready?' you call my words over again so I can hear you. Note seconds first, minutes afterwards, and let the hours alone."

Up he went and I soon heard him sing out, "Are you ready?" I answered as he ordered me. The next was "look out," and then "mark."

He took three distances, then came down where I was, took a look at my slate and said, "that's all right." Then the mate took the sun and the old man noted time.

It was still a dead calm, but the swell seemed to increase. "I should not be at all surprised," said the old man, "if there had been a typhoon about the Bonins."

"Yes," said the mate, "old Bill in the Howard and Capt. Coggeshall in the Monticello were always in a hurry to get a typhoon to drive the rest off the ground."

"It's not the typhoon or the heavy swell that's going to drive me away," said the old man, "but we are nearly ten months out from the Sandwich Islands, and the recruits we got there lasted us only eight. We got nothing at the Groups and nothing at the Caroline Islands, and what few yams we got at the Ladrões and the Bonins are nearly gone, for I count them about every day, and I believe there were but eighteen left this morning."

These yams weighed from 5 to 15 pounds apiece. The old man sewed them all up separately in white canvas with white twine, and hung them up apart from each other so they would not touch in heavy weather. At half past three he got some more distances.

After we had cleared up the decks at 5 o'clock, he was waiting for sun-down to take in sail, as he always wanted to get his supper by candle light. He stood by the head of the larboard boat looking to windward. The mate came along and asked him if he ever got sunset longitude. Said he, "what new fan-dangled notion have you got now?" The mate told him when we were at Umata bay, in the Ladrões, three English whalers lay there—the Henrietta, Bernsday and Fawn. They asked him if we Yankees worked sunset longitude; they said it was worked out just the same as the ship's time, although there was no altitude. He said add the latitude and polar distance together, and for the lower limb add 21 miles to the sum, and subtract 21 miles from half the sum, for a remainder. In getting the upper limb subtract 53 miles from the sum and add 53 miles to half the sum for a remainder, but they must be taken at a proper distance from the meridian.

"Well," said the old man, "we'll get some sunset longitudes. Go down and note the chronometer," and turning to the 3d mate, (he, too, died at the age of 35 and lies in the Newtown cemetery) asked him for the spyglass. The old man got the lower and upper limbs. After we had shortened sail and got through tea, they started to work them out and after they had finished they placed us in lat. 31 28 N. lon. 150 10 E. The old man went to his chest, took a book, sat down at the table and began to read. He said, "these sunset longitudes were got up by James H. Brownlow, teacher of navigation and nautical astronomy, at 184 Chary street, New York. And the logarithms may be taken from Bowditch's or Thorn's Navigator, but we were so near the meridian that these did not amount to anything." He said they would do in the Atlantic but not in the Pacific Ocean.

T. A. B.

Jan. 19, 1882

"Whaler Pluck"

Boston Globe, 5th.

Speaking of Nantucket's automobile agitation, the Hartford Times remarks that the islanders are a peaceful lot, but set upon being happy in their own way, and tantalizingly recalls the whaler who, after a three-years cruise, in which he had encountered storm, wreck, scurvy, famine and other disasters, but not a single sperm, right or bowhead, brought home an empty ship:

Yet when he came around Brant Point  
He flew his pennon high,  
And when he tied up at the wharf  
He lustily did cry:  
We've come home clean as we went out,  
And we ain't seen a whale,  
And we ain't got a bar'l of oil,  
But—we've had a damn fine sail."

That little jingle is familiar to all Nantucketers, Mr. Globe Man, along with "Marm Hackett's Garden," and we note that someone sent it to you without delay. If, perchance, you are not familiar with the other gem, just say the word. "Whaler's Pluck" has been printed in these columns several times in the past, but here it is once more, for the benefit of those who did not see it in the Globe:

A whaler from Nantucket town  
He had the worst o' luck;  
He sailed far south around the Horn,  
But not a whale he struck.  
Three years he cruised, north, east and west,  
From pole to torrid zone,  
And when he laid his cruise for home  
He'd neither oil nor bone.  
Yet as he sailed around Brant Point,  
He set his pennant high,  
And when he tied up at the wharf  
He lustily did cry:  
"We've come home clean as we went out,  
And we didn't raise a whale;  
An' we ain't got a bar'l o' oil—  
But we've had a damn fine sail."

Jan. 10, 1914

[Both the following communications were in type, but were crowded out of last week's issue.—ED.]

(Correspondence of the Journal.)

SO. BOSTON, Dec. 21st, 1880.

MR. EDITOR:—

I often see faces in the street that set me thinking of Nantucket as it was away back in my younger days. Not long ago I saw a man in Boston who recalled a voyage of mine that began in 1846. In that year I left my good old Island Home for a four years' voyage in the Pacific and when we were four months out we sighted the Island of Mocha, at the same time twenty whalers, nineteen of them boiling. Next day we saw whales, down boats, and took a seventy-barrel one, which proved to be only the first good luck. We soon left and ran down the coast and between 18° and 19° south latitude we fell in with sperm whales, took 535 barrels of sperm and 25 of blackfish oil in 35 days, making 630 barrels, six months out.

This ended the season's work, and we went into Callao to recruit. While there, some of our men ran away and two of them kept away for good. Our fortunes varied from bad to good, and good to bad all through the voyage, but on the whole we came home to Nantucket after being gone 47 months, 6 days, with 2400 barrels of oil, valued at \$91,000, satisfied with our work.

Years passed away and I never heard anything of the two men who ran away from the ship in Callao. At length in conversation with a man in Boston I discovered from his description of a friend that one of the runaways was still alive. I got his address and wrote to him. He answered and sent his picture. He, like myself, had changed a great deal since 1846. He was showing signs of old age, for I could see in his hair "silver threads among the gold." Like every wise man, he had before he went to sea been saving money and he told me he had deposited some in the Nantucket Savings Bank in 1846, and he would now like to get some information about it. I told him he had trusted it in honest hands and that it was still waiting for him, principle and interest all rolled together. Lucky dog he was to have money at interest all these long years. Then he had something sad to inquire about, too. A friend to whom he was greatly attached died at sea after we left Callao, and the burial place of this friend was the question he asked. I looked in my log book and gave him the latitude and longitude of the place where we consigned the body to the deep. Between seventeen and eighteen hundred miles westward of the Spanish Main, but that I feared no tombstone marked the spot, no weeping willows shade. Alas! no; he glided from our hands into the blue depths of the Pacific and when we looked again there was no sign. "The ocean rolled as it rolled before."

T. A. B.

P. S.—The *Inquirer and Mirror* says the South Shoal Lightship was seen Thursday I think, and the *Journal* says Sunday. Please say if both are correct.

[Yes—Clark sights her frequently, generally on the approach of easterly weather.—ED.]

Feb. 5, 1800

Whaling Nantucketers in Wales  
Featured in Historical Quarterly.

"Nantucketers Build a Whaling Town in Wales" is the feature story of the April issue of "Historic Nantucket." Mrs. Rozelle Coleman Jones tells the story of finding in her attic an old diary kept by a great aunt, Abiel Coleman Folger, from 1806 to 1811. The diary revives the venture of Island whalers, Royalists of Revolutionary war days, at Milford Haven, Wales, to which Mrs. Jones adds some intimate backgrounds of the life of the families: Colemans, Folgers, and the Rotches.

The introduction shows the diary was written by Abiel Coleman Folger for her children in America. Reading through the diary, Mrs. Jones suggests, makes one wonder whether Abiel regretted remaining a Loyalist, forced to live in a strange land with all her children but one in America or whether she wished she had cast her lot with the Colonists and lived out her days on her native soil.

To help promote the study of Nantucket history in the High and Vocational schools, the Council of the Association announces it will provide two annual awards, one for each school, for which Nantucket history students will be eligible to compete. For the High School the award will be for the best essay presented on any subject involving the history of the Island or the achievements of the inhabitants. At the Vocational school each student writes in his own style and words a summary of Nantucket history. The award will be based on the student's presentation and understanding of the factors and events materially responsible for shaping Island history.

In extending approval the School Committee and the Superintendent of Schools agreed that the competition offered should stimulate wider interest in and more intensive application of the study of local history. The Association's award committee is composed of W. Ripley Nelson, chairman, Mrs. George W. Jones and Mrs. Joseph King. The awards will be handsome certificates, suitably framed, bearing the winner's name and a description of the award. The awards will be presented at the commencement exercises.

Apr. 30, 1935



## When Nantucket Hens Made Whaling Voyages.

By Wilbur G. Sherman, New Bedford.

Our chronicle begins October 8, 1873, at New Bedford, when this particular hen had the good fortune to sail on the whaleship Milton, being a member of the family flock of the master, Captain William C. Fuller of Nantucket. Captain Fuller was accompanied on this voyage by his wife and it is very probable that the half dozen hens were natives of Nantucket also.

We should not forget that these old-time whalers were floating homes and frequently the captain's family would make the voyage and naturally have along the pick of the farm-yard, that there might be a supply of eggs for wife and children. It might puzzle some to know where the hens would be safely housed on such a busy craft, but this is neatly planned for, as the under part of the ship's vice, or work bench, located against the after side of the try-works, is provided with upright slats spaced along the front and ends and within is a lengthwise perch, and below a dropping-board if desired.

A hen pen, as described, will be found on the old whaleship Charles W. Morgan, at Colonel Green's, and a similarly arranged ship-work bench is displayed on the west balcony of the New Bedford Bourne Whaling Museum.

After being at sea awhile and accustomed to conditions aboard ship, the hens would be given liberty periods, having presumably become good sailors. For the comfort of the hens a barrel of earth was provided and who can say how widely broadcasted over the oceans is the soil of old Dartmouth and Nantucket, in addition to that from Marm Hackett's famed garden.

On suitable days the barrel of dry loam would be emptied in the lee scupper and then royally busy dust bathing was enjoyed, after which dusting the dry earth would be carefully re-barrelled for other days. On some ships, instead of emptying the dirt onto the deck, the hens dusted in the barrel itself.

Fowl aboard ship, like hens ashore, want to see what is beyond their own particular yard. It will be remembered that the ship's bulwarks were nearly breast-high, an elevation that topped even the vision or a Langshan. Beyond the bulwark railing was a peril greater even than the cook's pot, because the impetus of too powerful a soar would carry the unsuspecting and inexperienced hen past the intended perch and over to a bedraggled swim. However, if circumstances were favorable, a boat would be manned and lowered and the feathered lady rescued from such an inglorious escapade.

Regardless of such occasional mishaps, the course southward on the Atlantic is steadily held, the Cape of Good Hope is rounded, and in the southern Indian ocean, two right whales are captured on the long stretch to the prolific grounds off New Zealand, where the voyage is made. Then homeward bound, the breadth of the vast Pacific ocean, around inhospitable Cape Horn and

northward along the western side of the Atlantic to the home port, New Bedford, arriving October 24, 1876. Thus after an absence of slightly over three years returns our feathered heroine, wise and renowned and notably sturdy.

It is interesting to recall these good old days of the nineteenth century, when whalers were returning to New Bedford from all parts of the world, bringing in addition to the polyglot representatives of humanity, a delightful miscellany of creatures for pets.

What was home without a parrot or the children's life without the cheerful donkey, St. Helena's exile? Master and mates and hilarious crew of whaler and merchantmen homeward bound were solicitously bringing living remembrances of tropic visitations. Thus to them, we owe the blood strains that were blended into the present day Rhode Island Reds, which have in ancestry the handsome ruddy fighting cocks of the Malaysian isles. The voyage is ended, the tale is done, but the refrain continues on without end.

## Nantucket Whaling in the Past.

In the year of 1886, which was several years after the whaling industry of Nantucket had ceased, a few inhabitants of Tuckernuck sighted, one day in May, a large school of right whales about one mile south of that island. Knowing the value of their bone (at that time) they decided to come to the town of Nantucket and interview Mr. Joseph Macy, who kept a supply store on Straight wharf.

Mr. Macy in his earlier days was in the whaling industry. Therefore, it was their good fortune to equip themselves with the necessary articles used in capturing whales. They secured from Mr. Macy a whaleboat, harpoons, lances, towlines, and other equipment.

They started for the island of Tuckernuck and arrived there at sundown, but were too late to start that day. The next morning they left at break of day. They launched their boats and rowed out through Smith's Point opening, reaching the whaling ground at sunrise. After cruising around for about an hour, Capt. Timothy Clisby, in charge of the boat, called to Mr. George Coffin, in the bow: "I believe I see something on our left which might possibly be a whale submerged."

"Sure enough", cried Mr. Coffin.

Capt. Clisby headed the boat in that direction and cautioned his crew not to make any more noise with their oars than they possibly could help.

"Now pull ahead easy, boys", cautioned the Captain. Within a short time they were quite handy to the whale. "Be ready now, Mr. Coffin", said Captain Clisby.

Mr. Coffin stood up with a harpoon in his hand. By this time the bow of the boat touched the side of the whale. Mr. Coffin braced himself and with all his strength plunged the harpoon deep into the whale's body. Instantly he grasped another harpoon and plunged that into the whale. At the same time he ordered the men with the oars to back water, which was done none too quickly.

The big whale submerged head-first to the bottom of the ocean, throwing his big flukes out of the water. Mr. Coffin then left his place in the bow and took the Captain's position. By this time, the whale was getting under way. The towline which was fastened to the harpoon in the whale was running at a terrific speed through the chocks in the bow.

This line was coiled in a big tub in the after-part of the boat, with a turn around the loggerhead. Every once in a while they would check the speed of the line, taking an extra turn around it. By tending the line very carefully, they were able to obtain control of the boat.

The whale was now carrying them at a terrific rate of speed. It was not long before they were several miles off shore, then the towline slackened.

They knew then that the whale was getting ready to come to the surface. Soon the big whale jumped half its length out of water, and thrashed it with his big fluke. It wasn't until the whale had quieted that the Captain said, "Now is our time, boys, pull ahead." Captain Clisby stood up with his big lance and when he was near enough, plunged the lance into the whale's heart.

"Back water, boys", cried the Captain.

The big whale submerged again but only for a short time. He came to the surface and began spouting blood. The big whale turned over on his side and went through many flurries and died. They towed the whale in on the east side of Tuckernuck. Then they built try works and cut the whale up. This yielded many barrels of oil and a great deal of valuable bone.

Whales have been sighted several times since and several unsuccessful attempts have been made to capture them.

—Marriott Fisher.

[Editor's Note: The author wrote this when she was in the seventh grade.]

Mar. 15, 1934

Feb. 15, 1930



# THE INQUIRER.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 8, 1847.

**THE WHALE FISHERY.** The last number of the New Bedford Whaler's Shipping List contains a set of very important tables, carefully prepared for that paper, showing the present and comparative condition of the Whale Fishery throughout the United States, with reference to the imports of Oil and Bone, number and description of vessels employed, prices of Oil, &c. &c. We have not room for these tables entire, but the following abstract will be found, we think, to contain a sufficiently clear statement of most of the material facts which they present. The Mercury prefaces its publication of them with some remarks, from which we make the following extracts:—

"These statements have all been derived from the most authentic sources and their general accuracy may be relied upon. It will be seen that the quantity of Sperm Oil imported during the last year is much less than in several years preceding, and falls short of more than one third the average imports during the preceding eight years. The imports of Whale Oil, also, are less than in several preceding years; while the average length of voyages, and consequently the expense of 'catching,' has exceeded those of former years. The amount of tonnage now employed in the Whale Fishery from all the ports in the United States, shows a diminution of 2,971 tons, since the 1st of Jan., 1846.

Ports.	Ships and Brigs.	Schrs &c.	Bbls Sperm.	Bbls Whale.	Lbs. Bone.
New Bedford	59	3	38,380	80,812	456,900
do, in Merchantmen	1	1	300	215	256,025
Fairhaven	12	0	12,049	15,475	101,449
Nantucket	10	2	15,171	1,731	14,000
do, in Merchantmen	1	0	1,828	6,633	20,200
Warren	6	0	2,324	9,169	71,900
Stonington	5	0	1,055	9,169	71,900
New London	13	3	1,397	27,441	183,450
Sagharbor	14	0	1,076	29,295	138,832
do, bro't on freight			154		66,186
Other Ports	38	32	21,587	36,722	967,937
	169	41	95,211	207,493	2,276,939

Oil and Bone shipped home from outward bound and wrecked whalers that had not completed their home by wh. in consequence of some disaster, voyages, return, and 1705 bbls Whale Oil, and 4953 bbls Sperm, and 976,000 lb Whale.

Imports of Sperm and Whale Oil from Jan'y 1, 1838, to Jan 1, 1844, and 1, 1844, to Jan 1, 1847.	Whale.	Bone.
Sperm.	26,552	
1838	132,356	2,783
1839	142,336	2,708
1840	157,791	2,078
1841	159,304	2,073
1842	165,637	1,611
1843	166,985	2,067
1844	139,594	2,047
1845	157,917	2,723
1846	95,217	2,074

## AVERAGE VOYAGES.

Table of voyages made by Sperm and Right Whalers in the years '42 to '46, with average time absent and quantity of oil brought home.

ARRIVALS IN '42	Average Time absent.	Average Cargoes.
55 sp whalers	41m 8ds	1973 135
742 Season rt whalers	24m 15ds	422 1722
131 Season rt whalers	10m 15ds	122 1602
65 Atlantic sp whalers	13m 28ds	280 12
ARRIVALS IN '43		
70 sperm whalers	41m 13ds	1641 124
90 2 season rt whalers	25m 10ds	311 1931
15 1 season rt whalers	11m 28ds	92 1398
55 Atlantic sp whalers	14m 20ds	285 25
ARRIVALS IN '44		
60 sperm whalers	43m 00ds	1419 293
112 2 season rt whalers	25m 09ds	248 2059
7 1 season rt whalers	11m 14ds	69 1176
42 Atlantic sp whalers	12m 00ds	248 38
ARRIVALS IN '45		
91 sperm whalers	43m 21ds	1291 387
101 2 season rt whalers	24m 00ds	196 2180
8 1 season rt whalers	12m 04ds	55 796
43 Atlantic sp whalers	13m 07ds	238 76
ARRIVALS IN '46		
42 sperm whalers	41m 06ds	1350 280
94 2 season rt whalers	30m 02ds	225 2034
1 1 season rt whaler	12m 02ds	2005
45 Atlantic sp whalers	14m 07ds	259 14

## STATEMENT

Of the prices of Sperm and Whale Oil and Whalebone on the 1st and 15th of each month of the year 1846, together with the average price for the year, and the average price per year for seven years.

	Sperm.	Whale.	Bone.
Jan'y 1st.	89	31	No sales.
" 15th.	91	36	" "
Feb'y 1st.	93	36	33
" 15th.	92 a 93	36	33
March 1st.	91 a 93	35	34
" 15th.	90	33 a 36	35
April 1st.	90	33 1-2 a 36	No sales.
" 15th.	90	34 a 36	" "
May 1st.	89 1-2	34 a 36	35 1-2
" 15th.	88	34 a 34 1-2	34 1-2
June 1st.	87 1-2	31 1-2 a 33	34
" 15th.	85	32 1-2	34
July 1st.	80	30	No sales.
" 15th.	80	32	" "
August 1st.	80	30 a 34 1-4	34
" 15th.	80	29 a 32	34
Sept 1st.	80 a 81	29 1-2 a 31	32 a 33
" 15th.	80 a 81	31 1-2 a 33	32
Oct 1st.	85 a 86	32 a 34	33 a 34
" 15th.	85 a 86	32 1-2	33
Nov 1st.	86	33 a 34	33
" 15th.	95	34 a 36	33
Dec 1st.	99	38 a 38 1-2	35
" 15th.	100	40	30
Av'g 1846	87 7-8	33 3-4	34
" 1845	88	32 7-8	33 5-8
" 1844	90 1-2	36 1-2	40
" 1843	63	34 1-2	55 3-4
" 1842	78	33 3-4	23
" 1841	94	31 3-4	19 2-3
" 1840	100	30 1-2	19

## STATEMENT

Of Sperm and Whale Oil and Whalebone on hand Jan. 1, 1847.

	Sperm.	Whale.	Bone.
New Bedford	2,450	4,300	117,900
Fairhaven	1,335	600	5,000
Westport	1,400		
Mattapoisett	54		
Nantucket	7,500	700	
Warren	1,675	2,950	
Newport	191		
Sagharbor		125	
New York			
Total	14,614	7,775	122,800

Of the stock of Sperm Oil at Nantucket, a large part is in manufacturers' hands, and will not probably come into market in a crude state. There are three small lots of oil, principally Whale, from Sagharbor, and also a quantity of Whalebone in hands of commission houses in New York. The exact quantity we are unable to ascertain.

Fishery, January 1, 1846, and January 1, 1847.

	Tonnage.
Jan. 1, 1846, 250 ships, 3 brigs, and 1 schooner.	82,633
VESSELS ADDED. 5 ships and 2 brigs.	2,052
Tonnage	2,052
WITHDRAWN, SOLD, AND LOST 1 ship, 5 brigs, and 1 brig, tonnage 1,954	68

Jan. 1, 1847, 251 ships, 2 brigs, 1 sch. 82,701

January 1, 1846, 73 ships, 1 brig, 25,564

ADDED. 1 ship, 2 schooners, 580

LOST. 2 ships, 708 128

January 1, 1847, 72 ships, 1 brig, 2 schrs, 25,436

FAIRHAVEN.

Jan. 1, 1846, 48 ships, 15,391

ADDED. 2 ships and 1 bark, 1036

SOLD AND LOST. 3 ships, 1017 19

Jan. 1, 1847, 48 ships, 15,410

WARREN.

January 1, 1846, 25 ships, 8,218

ADDED. 1 ship, 399

SOLD AND LOST. 3 ships, 961 562

January 1, 1847, 23 ships, 7,656

STONINGTON.

January 1, 1846, 26 ships, 8076

ADDED. Ship Betsey Williams, 400

January 1, 1847, 27 ships, 8476

NEW LONDON.

January 1, 1846, 69 ships, 1 brig, 6 schrs 26,522

ADDED. 1 ship, and 1 schr, 490

LOST. 1 ship, and 1 schr, 497 7

January 1, 1847, 69 ships, &c., 26,515

SAGHARBOR.

Jan. 1, 1846. 63 ships, 23,103

LOST—Ship Helen, 421

Jan. 1, 1847. 62 ships, 22,679

OTHER PORTS.

Jan. 1, 1846. 117 ships, 7 brigs, 29

brigs, 14 schrs, 42,772

ADDED—1 ship, 2 brigs, 4 brigs, 1,312

LOST, SOLD, &c.—9 ships and

barks, 8 brigs, 3 schrs, 3,739

2,427

Jan. 1, 1847. Tonnage of above ports, 40,345

TOTAL. Whole number of vessels

employed in the Fishery Jan. 1, 1847,

670 ships and brigs, 31 brigs, 20 schrs,

1 sloop, 230,218 Tons.

Whole number employed in the Fish-

ery Jan. 1, 1846, 678 ships and brigs,

35 brigs, 21 schrs, and 1 sloop, 233,189 Tons.

Showing a diminution in the whaling

fleet of 8 ships, 4 brigs, and 1 schr, in

1846, amounting to 2,971 Tons.

**AMERICAN INDUSTRY.** A large and respectable convention of citizens friendly to the cause of American Industry, was held at Washington Hall on Tuesday, and (by adjournment) on Wednesday evening of the present week. George B. Upton Esq. was chosen President of the Convention, David Joy Esq. and Capt. David Thain, Vice-Presidents, Messrs. Albert W. Starbuck and Henry A. Kelley Secretaries. The object of the Convention was appropriately announced by the President on taking the chair. Dr. B. H. West then offered the following resolutions, which he sustained by a forcible address illustrated with much statistical information:—

## PREAMBLE.

Whereas, Our country, rich in inexhaustible natural resources, and in the varied industry of an enterprising people, is now fast verging to a state of bankruptcy, national as well as individual, and

Whereas, The interests productive, manufacturing and commercial of the nation are suffering alike from foreign policy and domestic mismanagement; and

Whereas, It is the bounden duty of all governments, and of a republic in an especial degree, to pursue that policy, which shall at once provide means for its own support, and develop the capabilities of its people, and

Whereas, The past history of this country demonstrates that a discriminating Tariff on imports, has provided an ample revenue and brought into full and healthy activity, the entire energies of the people, therefore

Resolved, That we view the assessment of duties on imports, on the plan of discriminating in favor of our own productions, as the great means of supporting the Federal Government, and maintaining our own industry.

Resolved, That we consider it the paramount duty of Congress, immediately to revise the existing Tariff, and so to alter it, as that the duties shall favor our own productions.

Resolved, That the Whale Fishery, constituting a source of wealth to individuals, and of power in the nation, demands the friendly regard of our government, and should receive that attention in the revision of the Tariff, which it merits.

These resolutions, having been further discussed by Messrs. Thomas Macy, William R. Easton and others, were unanimously adopted. The Convention resolved to send seven delegates to the General Convention of the friends of American Industry, to be convened at New York, on the 5th of this month. The following gentlemen were selected, viz:

JARED COFFIN,  
DAVID THAIN,  
H. A. KELLEY,  
EDWARD FIELD,  
EDWARD H. BARKER,  
CHARLES G. COFFIN,  
WILLIAM S. FRENCH.

It was also voted to memorialize Congress on the subject of Protection for American Industry, and a Committee was raised, to prepare a memorial which will be presented to the citizens generally for their signatures. We regret that our engagements did not allow us to be present at the meeting, which as all who were more fortunate than ourselves, tell us went off well.

**MEMORIAL TO CONGRESS.** We publish this morning a copy of the memorial drawn up by the Committee appointed for the purpose, at the Convention of the friends of American industry held in this County, on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings last. The memorial is in circulation, for the signatures of our citizens. We most heartily approve the policy of memorializing Congress on the subject of protection, and we believe that the tone of our memorial, harmonizes with the feeling of the community in this matter. The memorial is conceived in terms so moderate yet manly, and its exposition of the causes of the present national financial embarrassment, is so reasonable and convincing, that we would urge all persons who desire to see the diversified industry of this great County once more quickened into life, to hasten and affix their names to the document, as on Monday it will be despatched to our Representative in Congress.

## TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:

The memorial of the undersigned, citizens of Nantucket, State of Massachusetts, respectfully represents,

That in common with many other citizens, they view with deep regret the present embarrassed financial condition of our National Treasury—combined as it is with the general derangement and distrust which pervades the whole business community, and extending itself as a matter of course, through all the great Manufacturing, Mechanical, Agricultural and Commercial interests.

Your memorialists are impressed with the belief that this state of things is produced principally by the low rates of duties upon the imports of foreign goods, and the consequent heavy importations of merchandise of foreign growth and manufacture; and although they cannot in their Memorial urge any extended series of reasons for the foundation of this opinion, yet there is one which they would offer to the consideration of the Representatives of the Nation, which of itself is in their opinion, almost conclusive, that the causes of this state of things are rightly stated by them.

Ever since the operation of the act of 1833, known as "the Compromise Act," there has been annually sold on the continent of Europe, and principally in the British market, a variety of American stocks and securities, from the proceeds of which sales, a present fund has been furnished to meet all the balances due by the inhabitants of our own country to those of foreign countries; London being the centre, at which most of our foreign balances are made payable; this state of things would have probably continued longer, had not causes which are as well known to Congress as to your memorialists, suspended the sale of these stocks and securities, and therefore made it imperative that our balances should be paid in specie. This change from the former course of trade, has operated and is now operating disastrously through and upon all the great interests of our country; moreover, the operation of the Compromise Act by annually reducing the receipts of the Treasury, has at last made the Government Bankrupt in its finances, and has deprived it of the power in this crisis of our foreign relations, to extend its fostering care in aid of the necessary National defences.

Your memorialists would therefore respectfully urge upon Congress the immediate revision of the tariff, based upon the principle of discrimination; placing upon the necessities of life and upon those articles which enter largest into the consumption of the great body of the people, and are not generally produced in our own country, a low scale of duties;—upon those articles, which come into immediate competition with our own manufactures, such a scale of duties as will allow a just and reasonable protection to our own labour, against the down trodden labour of Europe, and will ensure to our own industrious classes, constant employment and proper remuneration, and lastly, upon what may be called articles of luxury, the highest scale of duties, which in the opinion of Congress will ultimately produce the greatest revenue from this source.

Your memorialists would further urge upon Congress the necessity of raising by duties upon imports, such an amount of revenue as shall fully and honorably meet all the economical expenses of a well administered government.

And finally your memorialists would respectfully urge the prompt attention of Congress to this important subject; living at a distance as they do from the scenes of your labors, they cannot but think that time might be as profitably employed upon subjects connected with the business and prosperity of the great mass of the people; and with the continuance of the honor and credit of the Government itself, as upon many other subjects now in agitation before the concentrated wisdom of the Nation.

Nantucket, 4th month, (April) 1842.

Apr. 2, 1842



[From the Yarmouth Register.]

## Whaling in the Olden Time.

To that part of Yarmouth now called Dennis, belongs the high honor of furnishing the man, who instructed the Nantucket men in 'the art of killing whales.' It is well known how

"Seven cities now contend for Homer dead,  
Through which the living Homer begged his bread."  
To prevent any such contention about the question of Ichabod Paddock's birth-place, it will be proper to place on record, that he was the son of Zachariah Paddock, of Yarmouth, (now Dennis,) and grandson of Richard Sears, the patriarch of Quivet Neck, (East Dennis.) We have little acquaintance with Ichabod Paddock, beyond the important fact of his officiating as the instructor of our friends in Nantucket in 'the art of killing whales.' As he was a native of Yarmouth, and therefore of Cape Cod, he was doubtless an individual of great skill in his profession, and an honorable, enterprising man. Less than this he could not well have been. It was on reference to the men who, following his lessons, had in less than a century made New England famous abroad, that Edmund Burke spoke in such eloquent strains in the English Parliament, of the wonderful extent of our whale fishery. That 'recent people,' said Burke, (meaning Cape Cod and Nantucket men,) not yet 'hardened into the bone and muscle of manhood.' Our enterprise and perseverance, excited the astonishment of mankind in the days of Edmund Burke, and well might; for no sea but was 'vexed by our toils.' We pursued our gigantic game under the 'frozen serpent of the South.' And here at home, our jutting promontories were crowned with 'whale houses,' as they were called. Their ruins are yet to be seen. We had two in Dennis. They were buildings of considerable extent, with cellars under them, where doubtless was stored the means for 'mixing a mug of flip.' The whale house contained two apartments, with sleeping bunks for the accommodation of those who came from a distance. For many of the boats' crews came from Harwich (now Brewster,) and the south side of Yarmouth. It is said that thirty-six boats have been engaged in one winter, in whaling at Dennis. This might have been at a time of some whaling fever. But the proceeds of the whale fishery,—I mean the shore fishery,—was an important addition to the yearly gains of our fathers, for more than a century. In the early days, many of the boats were manned by Indians. We have still standing in Dennis, one of those large, old-fashioned houses, framed out of the timber that grew in our fields, that was paid for by the earnings of one successful season of whaling. This house was built by Lieutenant Jonathan Howes, who employed, or owned, a crew of Indians. Lieut. Howes owned, too, the service of an African, who is styled 'Bezekiah Neaur.' 'Old Kiah' appears to have been Master Howes' factotum, and no doubt identified himself with all that concerned his master. In tracing back the genealogy of our families, we are made sensible of the hazardous nature of their pursuits. To beard the king of the deep on his native element, requires courage and coolness and skill, such as can only be acquired by habitual experience; but to brave men, (like as Cape Cod men,) 'the danger's self is lure alone,' and the love of adventure was enkindled in the minds of the youth by listening to the whale stories of old men, as they gathered round the huge fireplace of the whale-house. And when on some bright frosty morning the welcome 'wail' was displayed, and the spout of the whale rose up in graceful jets, against the blue sky, the whole village was astir. The culminating point of interest, however, was the cutting up. Stretched out upon the sand lay the monstrous leviathan of the deep, an object of admiration to the young, and of congratulation to the old. The veterans of the whaling school are up in the whaling school are up in the whale

house drinking to the success of the business, and fighting their battles over, and showing how whales were killed in their times. Sometimes it happened that some village Nestor would, after securing a piece of the choice 'flake' for his to-morrow's dinner, find his legs utterly incapable of performing the office of carrying him home. One old worthy, on being conveyed home in an ox cart by one of his neighbors, was heard soliloquizing in praise of ox carts: 'If God spared his life another year,' murmured the old man, he 'would have a cart!' Somewhat different were the reflections of another pious old gentleman, as he was being assisted home from a similar gathering, when the bottle had, in accordance with the usage of the time, been circulated pretty freely. 'Oh what a condition I am in to-day, groaned the old patriarch, 'and what preaching we had yesterday!' Just so. It was not exactly the thing, certainly; but there were no temperance societies in those days, no Maine liquor laws, and so our fathers did sometimes take a drop too much. But they kept a bright look out for whales nevertheless, the men sitting around the fire in social conversation over their flip, while the young men carried on their athletic sports around the whale-house, pitching quoits, playing ball, etc. Occasionally the spirits of youthful fun would lead to the perpetration of some practical jokes upon the gravity of the circle around the fire in the old men's room.

But I must draw this rambling sketch to a close. The whaling interest of our country is emphatically a new England interest. It now counts its income by millions. I have met with our whaleships in the most distant parts of our globe. Our whalers continue to maintain that ascendancy which was admitted by Burke on the floor of the House of Commons almost one hundred years ago. But tracing the successive stages of the enterprise we come at last to the sandy and sterile shores of Cape Cod.

T. P. H.  
Dennis, Jan. 1860.

## FEBRUARY 10, 1860.

### Frauds in Sperm Oil.

The Boston Mercantile Reporter, of the 22d, in its New Bedford correspondence, has some very sensible remarks upon the causes of the decreased consumption of spermaceti oil as a lubricator for manufacturing purposes. A few years ago, before 'the abominations of coal, tallow, and rosin oils,' had an existence, the virtue of sperm oil as the only true lubricator was an accepted article of faith in the creed of every manufacturer. But as the price of pure sperm oil became extravagantly high, substitutes were introduced, owing whatever of what virtue they possessed to the admixture of a limited quantity of sperm oil with cheaper ingredients. spurious oils were palmed off for the genuine article; and, in the uncertainty of attaining a good article, even at a high price, the demand gradually fell off. High prices afforded a premium to every kind of fraud, and quackery monopolized the market. In allusion to the various frauds in Sperm Oil, and the difficulty of detecting them, the Reporter says:—

The importance of having pure sperm oil is very generally admitted by intelligent manufacturers. Yet the instruments which are relied upon to test that purity are entirely inadequate to the task assigned to them. They give only specific gravity, which in crude oils varies from 10 percent above the standard, (88 80.) The variation in manufactured oils is far greater, so that an oil may weigh from 15 to 20 per cent above the standard, and be mixed; it may weigh just standard, and be mixed; or 10 to 15 per cent below the standard, and be perfectly pure. The great variations in the crude oils are generally found in whales taken out of their natural feeding grounds when their blubber is probably in a morbid or unhealthy state. In order to comprehend the difference in specific gravity of manufactured oils, it may be well to explain briefly the process of manufacture which is very simple.

Sperm oil consists of two principal elements Cetine or spermaceti and Oleum or oil. It also contains Margerine, a substance which does not yield to the first pressing, but in warm weather is expelled by the Taut press. Its manufacture consists of successive chillings or crystallizations and pressings, the oil running from the first pressing is winter oil, which should stand clear at 30° or below. The second pressing yields fall or spring oil which should remain limpid at 45°. The third pressing yields summer oil which stands clear at 60°. The fourth pressing yields taut pressed oil, which will usually chill below 75°. The specific gravity of the last oil is 20 per cent above the standard, that of the fall oil standard to 5 per cent above and that of the winter oil 5 per cent below. The taut pressed oil, which is principally margerine, and is worth about 25 cents per gallon less than winter oil, is frequently mixed with the stronger oils in hot weather, when it will not chill, and is a profitable mixture to the seller. It is also mixed in some instances with crude oil. The proportion of spermaceti, which to oil manufacturer, is the great desideratum, being in this oil infinitesimally small, this compound is a gross fraud upon the purchaser, though its qualities are negative rather than positive, being a weak dilution. Whale oil may be mixed with this oil in the proportion of 20 gallons to a hundred and the compound will weigh standard. In this case, whale oil acts on machinery as poison on the human stomach, it is not a judicious investment for the manufacturer. We have given the above as some of the most glaring frauds perpetrated under the name of pure sperm oil. Lard, seal, resin, tallow, and a host of inferior and deleterious oils are annually mixed and sold under the name of spermaceti oil. To say that their name is legion is only a literal statement of the truth. We have only time now to allude to them. The shrewd reader will be convinced from the above examples, that the test of specific gravity is no test at all within the above limits. The refrigerator and thermometer will detect the presence of taut pressed oil when mixed with winter or spring oils. Its presence in crude, is not so easy to ascertain, as when chilled it closely resembles spermaceti, and the purchaser would be unlikely to suspect its true character till the manufacturing process exposed the cheat.

A mixture of whale and sperm can be detected by taste, which is the only reliable criterion that the oil manufacturer can rely on. It is very much to be regretted that there is not a more accurate test easily accessible to all consumers. The refrigerator, the thermometer, and the cotton spindle, are the three best detectives, but the last is rather expensive. For a long time to come, the only safety for the consumer will consist in buying his oil of those manufacturers whose high character and integrity is a guarantee for the purity of their oils. We confess that we are of the number of those who believe that at any thing below speculative prices, sperm oil is the best and cheapest lubricator ever yet discovered. If a balance sheet should be struck off, showing the cost of extra wear and tear, damage to machinery by poor substitutes which would not be used but for the small redeeming grace of sperm oil which they contain, the result would be truly astounding. We happen to know of mills, where an outlay of from \$28,000 to \$30,000 has been paid, all for a hazardous experiment, made with the hope saving two or three thousand dollars in oil.

[From the New Bedford Shipping List.]

## THE WHALE FISHERY FOR 1858.

The results of the last year's Whale Fishery, as nearly as the same can be ascertained will be found in our columns to-day; and as we flatter ourselves with a close approximation to accuracy. As compared with former years it has been generally unproductive, and in many cases disastrous, and there has been a consequent diminution of the number of vessels and tonnage employed in the fleet, amounting to 8,033 tons as compared with the previous year. Prices for Sperm Oil have ruled lower than in any year since 1850. There have been but few losses at sea,—the Rajah of this port, and the Columbus of New London being the only ones reported of the North West Fleet.

The whole number of vessels now employed in the Whale Fishery from ports in the United States is 560 ships and barks, 19 brigs, 45 schooners, including 195,115 tons against 587 ships and barks, 18 brigs, and 49 schooners, including 203,148 tons, in the previous year.

The importations of Sperm Oil during the year in barrels are 81,941; Whale 182,223, and 1,540,600 pounds of Whalebone.

The average prices of Sperm Oil during the year is 121 cents per gallon; and for Whale Oil 54 cents. Whalebone, Polar 94½ cents; North West 90 cents.

From the 1st of November, 1857 to March 15th, 1858, there were no transactions in bone that were made public; and from July 15th, 1858, to January 1st, 1859, very few sales were made, and those on private terms.

Exports, Sperm, 3,336 barrels; Whale 19,503; Whalebone 1,049,466 pounds.

Stock on hand, 17,176 barrels Sperm; 82,375 Whale; and 400,000 pounds Whalebone,—against 39,307 barrels Sperm; 92,103 barrels Whale; and 285,500 pounds Whalebone on the first of January, 1858.

The prospects for the coming year are far from flattering, but upon the whole perhaps not less encouraging than at the commencement of the year that has now passed. There will from present appearances, be a further diminution of vessels employed in the fleet, and with a diminished competition the business may again regain a healthy state. Other fields of enterprise now open, and opening present better opportunities for investment than are now offered in the Whale Fishery. For the general results we refer our readers to the table subjoined:

### IMPORTATIONS.

Of Sperm Oil, Whale Oil, and Whalebone into the United States in 1858.

	bbls. sp. oil	bbls. wh. oil	lbs. bone
New Bedford,	46,218	103,105	1,184,900
Fairhaven,	8,553	15,745	84,500
Dartmouth,	1,801	250	.....
Westport,	2,366	445	4,500
Mattapoisett,	2,936	777	300
Sippican,	576	248	.....
District of N. Bedford,	62,450	120,870	1,274,200
New London,	1,539	38,120	116,100
Nantucket,	7,945	2,684	5,100
Sag Harbor,	1,321	4,209	16,000
Edgartown,	2,024	4,827	9,400
Warren,	776	48	12,700
Provincetown,	1,289	2,655	1,600
Mystic,	.....	1,092	.....
Greenport,	.....	1,225	.....
Cold Spring,	25	3,084	21,000
Falmouth,	3,130	.....	.....
Orleans,	309	188	.....
Fall River,	151	134	.....
Holmes Hole,	351	919	700
New York,	.....	120	90,200
Boston,	340	1,466	25,800
Total	81,941	182,223	1,540,600

The following is a comparative statement of tonnage of a portion of the vessels employed in the Whale Fishery January 1, 1858, and January 1, 1859, with a list of vessels added, withdrawn and lost from the several ports, since January 1, 1858.

NEW BEDFORD.	
January 1, 1858, 324 ships and barks, tonnage . . .	110,267
Added—Ships Daniel Webster 336, barks Joseph Grinnell 458, Pacific 314, Wm. Gifford 320. . . . .	
	1,428
	111,695
Deduct—Withdrawn, sold, condemned and lost, ships Alexander 421, Betsey Williams 400, Cortes 382, Menkar 371, Edward 339, Triton 315, barks Fortune 291, James Andrews 275, Rajah 250, Sea Flower 150, Vernon 307, Winslow 268. . . . .	
	3,764
Jan. 1, 1859, 316 ships and barks, tonnage. . . . .	107,931
FAIRHAVEN.	
Jan. 1, 1858, 47 ships and barks, 1 schr. tonnage . .	16,840
Deduct—Sold and condemned ships Pacific 314, Columbus 382. . . . .	
	696
Jan. 1, 1859, 45 ships and barks, 1 schr. tonnage . .	16,144
EDGARTOWN.	
Jan. 1, 1858, 16 ships and barks, 3 schrs. tonnage . .	5,776
Deduct—Schr. Monterey sold. . . . .	
	180
Jan. 1, 1859, 16 ships and barks, 2 schrs. tonnage . .	5,696
NANTUCKET.	
Jan. 1, 1858, 36 ships and barks, tonnage . . . . .	13,073
Deduct—Lost, sold, and condemned, ships Henry 346, Daniel Webster 336, Harvest 360, Peruvian 334, Young Hero 340, bark Nautilus 220, schr. W. P. Dolliver 90. . . . .	
	2,036
Jan. 1, 1859, 30 ships and barks, 1 brig, 2 schrs. ton. .	11,037
PROVINCETOWN.	
Jan. 1, 1858, 5 barks, 2 brigs, 21 schrs. tonnage . .	3,337
Deduct—Sold and withdrawn, brig Eschol 143, sch Olive Clark 95. . . . .	
	238
Jan. 1, 1859, 5 barks, 1 brig, 20 schrs. tonnage . .	3,099

Aug. 28, 1857

Jan. 14, 1859



# COMPENDIUM OF THE AMERICAN WHALE FISHERY.

Comprehending Alphabetical Lists of the vessels engaged in that pursuit from the various ports in the United States, with the date of their departure, and the latest advices received from them—up to Jan. 1, 1842.—Prepared for the Nantucket Inquirer, by Thomas Cross.

Vessels and time of sailing. Latest advices.

NANTUCKET.			
Alex. Coffin, Sept 8 '40	Ap 11	350w	
Alpha, in port.			
American, Dec 14			
Atlanta, May 13 '39	Mch 11 Tahiti	900w	150w
Aurora, May 12 '41	June 4 Fayal		
Baltic, Aug 17 '39	Mar 24 off Paya		
Barclay, Dec 10 '39	Mch Tahiti		
Catawba, Feb 1 '40	July 2 off Callas		
Charline, May 8 '39	Feb 14		
Charles & Henry, Dec 20 '40	July 5 Paya		
Charles Carroll, May 29 '40	May 10 Nouahera		
Christo'r Mitchell, Oct 25 '41			
Clarkson, July 16 '39	Mch Geographic Bay		
Colanbia, Sept 4, '41.			
Columbus, May 27 '39	Ap 21 Tahiti		
Congress, Aug 27 '39	June 8 Tahiti		
Consolation, July 29 '39	June 1		
Cyrus, Nov 1 '40	Dec 22 Abrolhos		
David Radlock, Oct 7 '41			
D. Webster, Dec 16 '38	Jan 20 off Ocean High Is.		
Edward Carr, Sept. 26, '41			
Elizabeth Starbuck, Aug 21 '41	Oct 1 Fayal, landed		
Enterprise, Dec 18 '40	June 22		
Foster, July 2 '41	Aug 21 Fayal		
Franklin, Aug 11 '41	Sept 23		
Gauges, July 17 '40	June 1		
Gauges, July 28 '41	Aug 19 Fayal.		
Harvest, Sept 17 '40	Sid fm Callao Feb 4		
Henry, June 1 '40	Mch Coast of Chili		
Henry Clay, Dec 17 '39	Mch Tahiti		
Henry Astor, Jan 24 '40	June 4 lat 16S		
Hero, Sept. 29 '41			
Howard, Nov 1 '41			
James Loper, June 25 '38	May off shore		
Janan, Sept. 17 '41	Oct 16 off C. de Verdis		
John Adams, Aug 31 '41	Sept 25 Fayal		
Joseph Starbuck, Nov 15 '38	Ap 20 Tahiti		
Jefferson, July 25 '40	Mch 16 off shore		
Levi Starbuck, June 12 '40	June 1 Tahiti		
Lexington, Aug 29 '40	Mar Tahiti		
Lima, Aug 29 '40	Ap 7 Tahiti		
Lynia, Sept 2 '40	Ap 7 Tahiti		
Mariner, Oct 6 '40	May 26 lat 26S, lon 81 55 W.		
Mary Mitchell, Aug 26 '38	Aug 2 sid fm Angier		
Mary, Sept 10, '39	no date		
Maria, April 21 '40	June 5 lat 15 S		
Martha, July 23 '41	Aug 23 Fayal		
Mount Vernon, Oct 1 '39	Apr		
Massachusetts, Aug 26 '41	Sept 24 Fayal, sent h.		
Montana, Dec 24 '41			
Monticello, Aug 2 '41	Aug 30 Brivao		
Nantucket, June 16 '41	July 20 Anpenman, landed		
Napoleon, Sept 10 '38	July 17 Anpenman		
Narragansett, Nov 7 '41			
Navigator, Aug 21 '41			
Obed Mitchell, Sept 4 '41	Sept 27 Fayal		
Ocean, Oct 13 '40	Mar 20 off Valparaiso		
Orbit, July 12 '41	Sept 10 lat 17 lon 37		
Orbit, Aug 10 '39	June 1 lat 10 lon 100		
Omega, Sept 3 '40	May 26 off shore		
Orion, May 23 '40	Mch Huachina		
Oregon, July 24 '41	Aug 3 Fayal		
Penobscot, brig, Sept 26 '41	Sept 26 off Callao		
Peruvian, July 30 '40	June 21 Paya		
Phoenix, June 21 '40	July 7 Paya		
Peru, bark, July 17 '39	July 27 Zambar		
Phoebe, July 18 '38	Mch Tahiti		
Planter, in port			
Ploughboy, June 27 '39	May 17 Bay of Is		
Potomac, Nov 14 '41			
President, Nov 17 '38	June 14 Paya		
Primrose, schr, July 9 '41	Apr 3 d out		
Rambler, Dec 13 '38	May 24 Maui		
Richard Mitchell, July 17 '39	July 29 Tahiti		
Rose, in port			
Sarah, July 14 '39	Mar 2		
Starbuck, Oct 14 '39	May 20 Tahiti		
Starr, Nov 9 '39	May 20 Paya		
Susan, Dec 11 '41	Aug 28 Fayal		
Three Brothers, July 12 '41	Aug 28 Fayal		
Thule, in port			
Tyeston, brig, June 17 '41	Aug 21 Fayal,		
United States, Nov 14 '41	Aug 5 off shore		
Walter Scott, Oct 31 '40	Apr 5 off shore		
Washington, May 14 '40	Apr		
Young Hero, in port			
Young Eagle, Aug 20 '40	Feb 12 Paya		
Zenas, Colling, July 12 '40	June 8		
Zone, May 19 '39	Mar Tahiti		

## NEW-BEDFORD.

Abigail, July 23 '39	Ap 25 Maui		
Adeline, Oct 14 '40	July 31 Anpenman		
Admission, Aug 3 '41	Aug 16 Fayal		
Azate, brig, May 41	Sept 27		
Alexander, Dec 30 '38	Mch Tahiti		
America, July 19 '40	Jan off St Pauls		
Ann, Sept 29 '41			
Ann Alexander, Oct 25 '41			
Archer, July 26 '41	Sept 1 Fayal		
Augusta, July 28 '38	Mch		
Amethyst, May 19 '40	July 17 Anpenman		
Averick, Aug 1 '40	June 1 off Anpenman		
Bahama, Nov 12 '41			
Terj, Tucker, Nov 16 '39	Ap 20 sid fm Callao		
ogota, brig, Sept 10 '40	Sept 14 off St. Mich.		
randy, Dec 21 '39	July 29 Tahiti		
arclay, July 12 '40	May lat 22S lon 106E		
Brighton, in port			
raganza, Dec 1 '40	Ap 28 Maui		
bramin, bark, Dec 25 '41			
Cambria, May 4 '39	July 29 Tahiti		
Canton, Nov 22 '38	July 29 Tahiti		
Canton, bark, Nov. 9 '41			
Canton Packet, bk, Dec 12 '41			

Roba Hood,	May 7.	Aug. 25.
Nimrod,	May 27.	Aug. 24.
George,	May 23.	Aug. 24.
Navy,	May 17.	Aug. 26.
Wm. Tell,	May 9.	Aug. 26.
Pioneer,	May 23.	Aug. 25.
Liverpool, 2d,	June 5.	Aug. 25.
Cortes,	May 27.	Sept. 1.
Luminary,	June 6.	Sept. 1.
H. Kneeland,	May 18.	Sept. 6.

Honolulu Times.

C. W. Morgan, Sept. 6 '41	Sept 26 Fayal		
Charles, May 22 '41			
Chase, bark, June 12 '41	Oct 19 Fayal		
Chas Frederick, in port			
China, Oct 6 '40	Mar 14 lat 24 S lon 14E		
Cleora, July 29 '40	Aug 9 Fayal		
Copia, Aug 2 '40	Feb off N. Hol.		
Corinthian, Aug 11 '39	June 9 Tahiti		
Cortes, April 4 '38	Mch Tahiti		
Courier, June 8 '38	Jan 14 Kingsmill Group		
Cherokee, bark, Dec 14 '40	Feb 22, lat into R la Plate		
Clarice, bark, Dec 7 '41			
Cora, bark, Sept 4 '41	Sept 30 off Western Is.		
Condor, Oct 9 '41			
Cornelia, Sept 1 '40	Oct 10 off Western Is.		
Ch'a Packet, brig, in port			
Chili, Oct 14 '39	July 4 off Callao		
Coral, June 15 '39	June 29 lat 18 S, lon 73 W.		
Columbus, bk, May 21 '40	July 29 Tahiti		
Dartmouth, Feb 20 '41	July 5 Paya		
Desdemona, Oct 7 '39	Apr Tahiti		
Draper, Aug 15 '39	July 17 Anpenman		
Dragon, bark, Ap 19 '40	June 6 off N. Hol.		
Emily Morgan, in port			
Elizabeth, June 7 '41	July 23 Fayal		
Enterprise, Sept 3 '38	Sept. 16 at sea		
Enterprize, Sept 3 '38	Ap 20 Tahiti		
Euphrates, in port			
Exile, Sept 2 '39	May 4		
Emeline, brig, July 11 '41	Aug 10 Fayal		
Emerald, Dec 25 '32	Oct 9 Tahiti		
Equinox, bark, Nov 2 '39	Ap 25 sid fm Tahiti		
Florida, Sept 14 '41	Oct 1 Fayal		
Frances, Dec 23 '39	May 21 Coast of Chili		
Frances Henrietta, Aug 4 '39	June 20 Paya		
Falcon, July 20 '40	May lat 23S lon 107E		
Fenelon, Aug 6 '40	Feb		
Frances, 2d, Sept 1 '40	Feb 7 Paya		
Franklin, bark, July 10 '39	Mch Tahiti		
Franklin, June 23 '41	July 30 Fayal		
Garland, July 12 '40	Ap 30 lat 25S lon 110E		
Gerard Pike, July 1 '41	July 31 Fayal		
Geo. Howland, in port			
Geo. Howland, Dec 6 '38	Apr, Emeo		
Geo. & Susan, Oct 17 '41	Aug 10 Angier		
Geo. & Martha, Aug 8 '40	June 9 Tahiti		
Geo. Porter, Nov 8 '39	June 9 Tahiti		
G. Washington, bk, Mch 25 '41	Aug 19 Fayal		
Goldconda, Dec 5 '39	June 8		
Goldconda 2d, June 30 '41	July 30 Fayal		
Good Return, Oct 21 '41	Oct 25		
Gov. Troup, Nov 4 '41			
Grand Turk, in port			
Gratitude, April 25 '41	Aug 26 Abrol. Rks		
Harrison, July 28 '41	Sept 24 C. de Verdis		
Herald, Dec 14 '40	June 30		
Herald, Nov 20 '39	Oahu Nov 14		
Heater, Nov 21 '40	June 10		
Hercules, in port			
Hercules 2d, July 19 '40	June 15 Angier		
Hibernia, Jan 6 '40	July 21 sid fm Mauritius		
Hope, April 21 '40	July 2 off Callao		
Hope, Sept 14 '41	Oct 2 Fayal		
Hope, bark, March 6 '41	Oct 16 off C. de Verdis		
Houqua, July 12 '41	Oct 12 R Janeiro		

## Vessels and time of sailing. Latest advices.

Huntress, Aug 20 '41	Oct 16 lat 30m S. lon 30 46		
Hydaspes, April 23 '41	Aug 4 Fayal		
India, July 19 '40	Oct 19 off Abrolhos Banks		
Iris, Aug 15 '39	June 16 Paya		
Isaac Howland, May 30 '39	Ap 8 Paya		
Israel, June 30 '41	July 27 Fayal		
Isabella, July 24 '41	Aug 22 off Corvo		
Java, June 10 '41	July 3 off W. Is.		
Jasper, bark, July 25 '40	July 14 sid fm Anpenman Bay		
John Adams, July 1 '41	Aug 4 Fayal		
John, Sept 29 '40	May 2 Paya		
John Howland, Oct 31 '39	Nov 27 off shore		
John & Edward, May 19 '41	Aug 19		
John, Dec 12 '41			
Junio, Sept 15 '41	spoken 1 day out		
Junio, brig, in port			
Kutusoff, Nov. 11 '41			
Lancaster, Nov 15 '38	Feb 15 lat 4 S, lon 169 E.		
Lafayette, Oct 22 '40	June 19 lat 18S		
Lagoda, Oct 9 '41			
Lalla Rookh, Oct 22 '40	June 17		
Laurel, brig, in port			
Leonidas, in port			
Lewis, bark, Nov 6 '41			
Liverpool, June 15 '40	July 17 Anpenman		
Logan, in port			
London Packet, Nov 23 '40	July 17 Anpenman		
Lucas, Sept 17 '39	July 14		
L. C. Richmond, June 6 '41	June 23 Fayal		
Maria Theresa, July 30 '40	July 26		
Mars, bark, June 6 '41	Aug 4 Fayal		
Mary, Dec 21 '39	Aug 9 Augustine B.		
Mayflower, July 11 '41	Aug 4 Fayal		
Mercator, May 23 '40	July 17 Anpenman		
Metacomb, Nov 4 '41			
Milton, Dec 11 '39	Ap 28 Maui		
Milvina Smyth, Jan 10 '40	Apr		
Marcella, bark, in port			
Milwood, bark, May 2 '40	Sept 10		
Magnolia, Dec 2 '38	May 24 Maui		
Maria, bark, Jan 1 '41	Sept 11 off Western L.		
Margaret Scott, Jan 9 '41	June 25		
Mercury, May 25 '41	Sept 7 lat 52S lon 64		
Massachusetts, Oct 6 '40	Aug Tahiti		
Midas, Dec 7 '37	May Valparaiso		
Milo, Dec 24 '38	Mch Tahiti		
Messenger, June 3 '41	Sept 23		
Milvina, Oct 31 '39	May 20 Rio Janeiro		
Minerva, bark, in port			
Mohile, July 5 '40	Aug 20 Mozambique		
Montpelier, in port			
Moteczuma, Aug 23 '41	Sept 20 Fayal		
Moss, Dec 23 '40	June		
Mount Vernon, Dec 16 '40	July 24 Angier		
Nassau, Sept. 6 '41	Oct 4 Fayal		
Nautilus, Nov 20 '39	May 15 Tahiti		
Newport, bark, June 20 '41	July 20 Fayal		
New Bedford, Ap 3 '40	May 1 Paya		
Nile, May 30 '41	Sept 19 lat 25S		
Nye, Dec 18 '39	Jan 25		
Octavia, bark, June 25 '41	July 26 Fayal		
Orozimbo, Dec 7 '40	Feb 13 lat 55S lon 15W		
Peri, brig, Dec 12 '41			
Phoenix, April 29 '39	La Reina Oct 49		
Phocion, Aug 4 '41	Aug 27 Fayal		
Pioneer, bk, July 6 '39	July 29 sid fm Mauritius		

Truro	1	143
Orleans	1	654
Gloucester	1	110
Fall River	4	1,144
Warren	17	5,700
Providence	1	298
Newport	4	1,742
New London	6	16,938
Mystic	9	2,259
Stonington	18	5,843
Sag Harbor	18	6,292
Greenport	9	2,973
Cold Spring	7	2,919
Total Jan 1, 1854.	402	298,029

Pacific, Aug 15 '39	July 17 Paya		
Patric, 2d, Nov 5 '39	June 6		
Paradise, bark, June 9 '41	Aug 4 Fayal		
Paradise, bark, Nov 3 '40	Feb 25 off Massachusetts		
Parker, Aug 29 '39	Dec 31 Paya		
Perla, bark, Sept 30 '38	Mch 1 Pitcairn's Is.		
Pinto, bark, Sept 14 '40	Nov 20		
Pleasure Boat, May 20 '40	Ap 10		
Plow, April 15 '40	July		
Robert, bark, Sept 4 '39	July 17 Anpenman		
Robert Edwards, July 2 '41	Aug 3 Fayal		
Rodman, Aug 17 '40	Apr 5 Paya		
Roman, July 2 '39	June		
Roman, 2d, Aug 15 '40	Feb off N. Zeal.		
Rousseau, April 25 '41	May 16 Fayal		
Ridgely, bark, Aug 5 '41	Aug 30 Fayal		
Russell, bark, May 19 '41	June 11 off Fayal		
Sally Anne, June 24 '40	Aug 4		
Sam'l Robertson, Oct 22 '41	Feb 6		
Saith, Dec 22 '41			
Seine, bark, Oct 7 '40	Sept 11		
Sarah Louise, bark, Sept 15 '41	Sept 15 Fayal		
Smyrna, bk, Dec 22 '41	Sept 15 Fayal		
Stephanus, Nov 15 '41			
St. Peter, May 19 '39	June 6 Tahiti		
Susan, May 6 '41	July 24 Fayal		
Tobacco Plant, in port			
Trident, Aug 2 '38	Mch Tahiti		
Triton, in port			
Two Brothers, Nov 18 '41	June 2		
Tusculum, Dec 17 '39	June 2		
Tusculum, July 15 '40	July 25 lat 17S lon 117E		
Virginia, Aug 22 '40	May		
Wm & Eliza, Oct 21 '39	Oct 29 Tahiti		
Waverly, Dec 6 '31	Dec 12 Tombez		
W. & L. Parker, Dec 22 '41			
Wm Hamilton, May 1 '39	Feb off Chatham Is.		
William Holton, June 29 '39	Ap Tahiti		
Wm. Thompson, April 20 '39	Ap 22 Maui		
Wade, bark, July 19 '40	Ap 10 at sea		
Wainlow, bark, Aug 25 '40	Ap 10 off R la Plate		
Washington, Aug 16 '39	May 21 lat 24S lon 106E		
Young Phoenix, Dec 11 '40	lat 36 S lon 47 W.		
Zephyr, June 29 '39	Ap 23 Maui		
Zoroaster, brig, in port			

## FAIRHAVEN.

attention to the capturing of walrus, and 4,000 bbls. of oil were taken from them; and in the previous year, it was not until late August that the whales were found in abundance. Point Barrow, where all present got good for oil, the only barrier thereto being the extreme cold. The catch was large for the small fleet engaged, and gave an average of 990 bbls. of 14,000 lbs. bone. The fall short in bone is to the Walrus oil (which has no bone weight being included in the Whale. Only one went to Bristol Bay, where she got 500 whale oil and 2,000 lbs. bone, and but 5



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blue sky, the whole village was astir. The  
culminating point of interest, however, was  
the cutting up. Stretched out upon the  
sand lay the monstrous leviathan of the  
deep, an object of admiration to the young,  
and of congratulation to the old. The  
veterans of the whaling school are up in  
the whaling school are up in the whale

Lafayette, in port, Jan 6 40	Sept 17	400w 200s
Magnus, Jan 1 40	Oct 23 Tahiti	350
North America, in port, Dec		100
Philip Tebb, July 23 40		100
Rosalia, July 15 41	Sept 15 West. Is.	landed 180
Triton, in port, Oct 30 41	Oct 30 lat 36 lon 41	40s
Vermont, Aug 26 40	May 5 Akurea Harbor	1200w
Win Baker, Aug 24 41	Sept 30 off West. Is.	to 20
NEWPORT.		
Audley Clark, Nov 16 40	May 4 Payta	clean
Geo. Champlin, Oct 24 39	Mch Tahiti	1100
Heber, in port, Oct 20 39	Mch 10	650w 450s
John Coggeshall, Oct 20 39	Sept 26 Fayal	clean
Margaret, Aug 23 41	Sept 26 Fayal	clean
Martha, Nov 4 41	Mch 8 Talcahuana	1900
Mechanic, July 21 38	Mch 8 Talcahuana	1900
Menhar, Nov 23 41		
Poonhontas, brig, Sept 18 41		
Sea Bird, brig, June 24 41	Sept	140s
Wm Lee, July 12 40	Ap 30 Payta	150
STONINGTON.		
Bolton, bark, June 8 40	Fayal July 19	clean
Calcedonia, June 16 41	July 20 Fayal	landed 75
Corvo, Dec 11 39	Feb 1 New Island	1000w 300s
Enterprise, brig, Sept 3 40		
Eugene, in port, Oct 11 lat 31 N. lon 24		
George, June 1 41	June 23 Fayal	landed 30
Herald, Oct 41	Oct 11 lat 31 N. lon 24	clean
Mercury, Nov. 30 40	Mch lat 56 lon 63	clean
Newark, Nov. 41	Nov 26 lat 4 N lon 35	clean
Philetas, bark, July 1 41	Aug 4 Fayal	landed 62
Th's Williams, Aug 27 40	July 29	2200w
Tybee, July 15 41		
MYSTIC.		
Aeronaut, May 13 40	Aug 29 St. Thomas, (Africa)	2000
Bingham, July 16 40	Aug 29 lat 23S lon 119E	1000w 100s
Blackstone, bark, May 17 41	June 29 Fayal	850
Leander, bark, Aug 16 41	Sept 8 Fayal	clean
Meteor, Aug 12 40	Feb	750
Uxor, brig, July 19 41	Aug 4 Fayal	clean
NEW-LONDON.		
Ann Maria, May 19 41	June 8 Fayal	clean
Armata, Aug 1 40	Dec 10 Ind O	1000w
Avis, Aug 23 41	Sept 13 Fayal	clean
Boston, bark, June 30 41	July 20 Fayal	clean
Clarence, April 2 40	June 5 off St Helena	1900
Clement, Aug 9 41	Aug 27 Fayal	clean
Columbia, July 9 40	Aug 17 Desol. I.	2000 s. el. 700 l.b.
Chelsea, Sept 14 41	Oct 1 Fayal	clean
Clement, bark, May 11 41	June 8 Fayal	15
Com. Perry, bk, June 8 40	Sept 1 Pombi Bay, oil unk.	
Cervantes, June 11 41	Aug 12 Fayal	clean
Connecticut, bark, Aug 13 41	Aug 30 Fayal	clean
Columbus, brig, June 27 41	Sept 11 off W. Is. P. 230	
Chas Henry, Aug 11 40	Aug 27 lat 17S lon 76W 300w 250s	
Ceres, bark, Oct 12 40	Sept 26 Simons Bay	oil unk.
Electra, July 21 41	Aug 19 Fayal	clean
Florida, Jan 13 41	March 24, lat 12S lon 31W.	clean
Friends, July 8 41	Aug 12 Fayal	clean
Francis, brig, March 9 41	Ap 26 lat 14 S	clean
Gen. Williams, Dec 10 40	Feb 23 off R la Plate	clean
Georgia, July 19 41	Aug 10 Fayal	clean
Hand, schr, June 8 40	Ap 10 Desolation Is.	clean
Indian Chief, in port, July 5 41		
Iris, Nov 5 41		
Jason, July 12 41	Aug. 4 Fayal	clean
VESSELS and time of sailing. Latest advices.		
John & Elizabeth, Je 22 40	Feb 5 King Geor S.	940w 60s
Jones, bark, Feb 20 41	Aug 20 off C. Good Hope	
Julius Caesar, Aug 2 41	Aug 25 Fayal	clean
Mentor, Aug 12 41	Sept 1 Fayal	clean
Montezuma, Sept 28 41		
Neptune, Oct 14 40	Mar 17 lat 44 S lon 53 E	1100
N. America, Oct 26 39	Mch Tahiti	620
Palladium, July 27 41	Aug 19 Fayal	clean
Pembroke, bark, July 13 41	Aug 4 Fayal	clean
Peruvian, in port, June 19 41	July 30 off from Pernambuco	clean
Phoenix, June 19 41	March 20 41	
Stonington, Sept 2 40	June 27 St. Helena	300s
Superior, Sept 29 40	Ap 2 Lahaina	120
Somerset, brig, April 10 41		
Shaw Perkins, slp, June 8 40	Ap 10 Desolation Is.	
Tenedos, bark, Oct 12 40	July 3 St. Helena	200
White Oak, April 10 41		
Wm. C. Nye, Oct 9 41		
BRIDGEPORT, CON.		
Atlantic, Sept 6 41	Sept 28 Fayal	clean
Hamilton, July 27 41	Aug. 31 Fayal	clean
Harvest, bark, Aug 4 40	Mch 17	1300
SAGHARBOR.		
Acasta, Sept 12 41		
American, Aug 12 40	May 7 lat 23S lon 110E	1600w
Ann, July 19 41	Aug 10 Fayal	clean
Arabella, Sept 20 41		
Cadmus, Oct 19 41		
Camillus, Dec 9 41		
Columbia, June 26 41	July 27 Fayal	40
Concordia, bk, Nov 28 40	Feb 22 Off R la Plate	clean
Crescent, Sept 27 41		
Daniel Webster, July 8 41	Aug 4 Fayal	clean
Fanny, May 21 41	July 17 lat 11 S lon 24 W	150w
France, Oct 1 41	Oct 3 lat 30N lon 60W	
Franklin, July 12 41		
Gem, Sept 26 41		
Hamilton, July 2 40	Mar 11	700w 800w
Hammond, Dec 21 40	July 22 Lombock	800w 400s
Hammond, Aug 4 41	Aug 26 Fayal	clean
Henry, June 16 41	July 29 Fayal	clean
Hudson, Oct 11 41	Oct 15 lat 37 lon 73	
Huron, bark, Sept 1 40	Aug 3 Rio J.	150w 550s
Marcus, Nov 17 41		
Neptune, June 1 41	June 24 Fayal	clean
Nimrod, Sept 30 41	Oct 20 lat 23 44 N. lon 45.50	
Ontario, Sept 1 40	Aug 10	1800w 300s
O C Raymond, brig Sept 21 41		
Panama, July 6 41	Aug 4 Fayal	clean
Phoenix, July 10 40	Aug 10	1900
Portland, June 28 41	July 21 Fayal	clean
Romulus, July 8 40	July 27 St. Helena	250w 500s
Silas Richards, July 10 41	Aug 4 Fayal	clean
Thames, July 6 41	Aug 4 Fayal	clean
Thos. Dickeson, July 14 41	Aug 4 Fayal	clean
Washington, June 2 41	Aug 24 Fayal	clean
Wickford, brig, Dec 22 41		
Wisconsin, Dec 6 41		
Xenophon, Aug 12 40	May 7	1400
COLD SPRING, L. I.		
Monmouth, bark, Sept 26 41		
Tuscarora, Aug 3 41	Sept 1 Fayal	clean
NEW SUFFOLK, L. I.		
Noble, bark, July 19 41	Aug 9 Fayal	clean

GREENPORT, L. I.		
Bavard, Sept 26 41		
Delta, Dec 4 41		
Roanoke, bark, June 3 41	Aug 21 lat 53N. lon 23 10W.	
Seraph, brig, July 12 41		
Triad, July 7 41	Aug 4 Fayal	clean
JAMESPORT, L. I.		
Washington, Sept 30 41		
HUDSON, N. Y.		
America, Sept 17 39	May 30 off N. Hol.	1800w 1000s
Beaver, Sept 1 40	Ap 3 Oahu	250w 150s
Edward, Dec 4 40	Mch 11 lat 57S lon 74W	63
Helvetia, Sept 30 39	July 28 Tahiti	2100
Martha, July 30 41	Sept 15 West. Is.	landed 130
POUGHKEEPSIE.		
Elbe, July 10 40	Mch 30 Honolulu	200
Pacific, July 30 41	Aug 28 Fayal	clean
N. P. Tallmadge, Oct 27 40	Oct 18 Acapulco	1580w 120s
New England, Dec 27 39	June 6 Panama Bay	900s
Vermont, bark, Dec 10 40		
NEWARK, N. J.		
Autumn, brig, Jan 41	July 19 off Flores	clean
Calcedonia, schr, Jan 6 41	B of Mexico May 1	30
John Wells, July 29 41	Sept 16	clean
WILMINGTON, DEL.		
Ceres, Aug 1 41	Aug 24 Flores	clean
Jefferson, Dec 18 41		
Lacy Ann, Nov 28 41		
Superior, in port, Aug 1 41		
DUXBURY.		
Sophia & Eliza, bark, Aug 1 41	Aug 30 Fayal	clean
FREETOWN.		
Elizabeth, Nov 15 41		
QUINCY.		
Creole, brig, Dec 41		
NEW YORK.		
Sabine, Sept 6 41	Sept 21	clean
BATH.		
Massasoit, bark, Oct 19 41		
Imports of Oil into the U. S. Dec., 1841.		
NEW BEDFORD—		
Ship Grand Turk,	20	1000
do. do. on freight,	345	
Ship Hercules,	23	850
Ship Logan,	43	1300
NANTUCKET—		
Ship Alpha,	42	2260
Ship Thule,	38	1450
EDGARTOWN—		
Brig Deborah,	13	65
WILMINGTON—		
Brig Superior,	26	600
BOSTON—		
Ship Emily Taylor, on freight,		
from Jasper of F. H., com.		
denied, Sept 10 41		1200
TOTAL—Sperm Oil, 17,870 bls. or 217,905 gals.		
Whale do. 4,470 "		or 140,808 "
Ships 6—Barks 1—Brigs 1—Schs. 0.		
Arrivals of Sperm and Whale Oil into the U. S. in 1841.		
	Sperm	Whale
New Bedford,	48	54,860
Fairhaven,	12	8,280
Dartmouth,	1	2,200
Westport,	3	3,180
Mattapoisett and		
Sippican, Aug 2	6	2,280
Wareham, Aug 3	1	1,430
Nantucket, Aug 21	2	39,891
Edgartown, Aug 21	1	3,169
Holmes Holeysa, Aug 1	1	500
Fall River, Aug 2	2	950
Newburyport, Aug 1	1	400
Plymouth, Aug 1	1	500
Salem, Aug 1	1	275
Boston, Aug 1	5	6,216
Falmouth, Aug 1	1	1,300
Provincetown, Aug 1	5	1,025
Newport, Aug 1	2	2,297
Bristol, Aug 1	3	2,930
Warren, Aug 1	5	3,115
Providence, Aug 1	3	1,670
New London, Aug 1	15	4,115
Stonington, Aug 1	3	1,500
Mystic, Aug 1	1	600
Sagharbor, Aug 1	22	5,310
Greenport, Aug 1	4	1,000
New Suffolk, Aug 1	2	260
Bridgeport, Aug 1	2	400
Hudson, Aug 1	1	300
Wilmington, Aug 1	4	5,500
Poughkeepsie, Aug 1	1	500
Newark, Aug 1	1	40
Cold Spring, Aug 1	2	4,250
Jamesport, Aug 1	1	150
Wiscasset, Aug 1	1	900
Portland, Aug 1	1	300
New York, Aug 1	1	1,000
Total of 1841	171	157,343
1840	175	156,445
1839	193	141,664
1838	189	129,400
1837	215	182,569
1836		133,921

Continuation of Totals:—		
1835	175,130	125,100
1834	129,824	122,292
1833	113,171	159,166
1832	79,067	179,241
1831	110,532	113,948
1830	106,829	86,274
1829	79,840	
1828	78,077	
1827	93,180	
1826	32,810	
1825	62,240	
1824	92,380	
1823	87,230	
1822	42,900	
1821	48,000	
1820	34,708	
1819	21,323	
1818	18,625	
1817	32,650	
1816	2,539	
1815	103,944	

JANUARY 3, 1842. Inquirer

The variation in manufactured oils is far greater, so that an oil may weigh from 15 to 20 per cent above the standard, and be mixed; it may weigh just standard, and be mixed; or 10 to 15 per cent below the standard, and be perfectly pure. The great variations in the crude oils are generally found in whales taken out of their natural feeding grounds when their blubber is probably in a morbid or unhealthy state. In order to comprehend the difference in specific gravity of manufactured oils, it may be well to explain briefly the process of manufacture which is very simple.

sch Olive Clark 95- 238  
Jan. 1, 1859, 5 barks, 1 brig, 20 schrs. tonnage. 3,099

Jan. 14, 1859



# WHALERS TO ARRIVE IN 1852.

The following is a list of whalers expected to arrive in 1852, with the quantity of oil on board when last reported. Atlantic whalers are not included.

NAME.	MASTER.	QUANTITY OF OIL.	SP.	WT.
NEW BEDFORD.				
Addison	Lawrence	1600		
Desdemona	Beckerman	1500		
Hecla	Besse	1050		
Hector	Smith	2100		
Herald	Stevens	1200		
Lewis	Clement	800		
Lalla Rookh	Gardner	1000		
Maria	Moores	280		
Mercury	West	1100		
Niger	Jernegan	1700	300	
Octavia	Pell			
Pacific	Hoxie	300		
" freight		640		
Statira	Coon	1700		
Swift	Vincent	1700		
Wm. & Eliza	Allen	1450		
Valparaiso	Cleveland	1200		
FAIRHAVEN.				
Amazon	Daggett	800		
Belle	Handy			
Hesper	Perry	500		
Martha	Skinner	1200		
Sharon	Rule	1800		
Wolga	Luce	100	300	
" freight				
WESTPORT.				
Champion	Gardner	450		
United States	Perkins	800		
NANTUCKET.				
Catawba	Swain	1450		
Chris. Mitchell	Sullivan	2400		
Empire	Upham	1800		
Harvest	Tice	1400		
Henry Clay	Skinner	1100		
Nauticon	Veder	1100		
Phenix	Winslow	1200		
Rich'd Mitchell	M'Cleave	1200		
WATKIN.				
Benj. Rush	Swan	675	1250	
Dromo	Daggett	300		
Franklin	Barton	700		
MYSTIC.				
Leander	Glover	140	300	
GREENPORT.				
Caroline	Babcock	630	90	
SAGHARBOR.				
Timor	Baker	48	1700	
NEW LONDON.				
McLellan	Quail	80	170	
Peruvian	Brown			

Since the above table was prepared, the Addison, Niger and Valparaiso, have arrived at New Bedford, Amazon and Wolga, at Fairhaven, Franklin and Benj. Rush, at Warren, and the Empire at Nantucket.

The North Pacific fleet of 1852, of American whalers, it is ascertained, comprises not less than 286 ships. This number exceeds that of any previous year except in 1846, when the fleet consisted of 292 ships.

**CALIFORNIA WHALING BUSINESS.**—The Popmannett, which was formerly a whaler, has been fitted up at this port, and left here yesterday on a whaling voyage, to the Gallipagos Islands and the coast of Peru and Chili; but she will probably sail under the Chilean flag, and is not expected to return here. The bark Sarah has also been fitted for a sperm whale voyage, and is now nearly ready for sea. She will proceed to the Atlantic States when she has succeeded in obtaining a cargo. The bark Envoy will probably be fitted for a voyage to the Arctic Ocean, as there are gentlemen who are ready to take her and fit her for such a voyage as soon as they receive advices from the States that their offer for her has been accepted.—*San Francisco Cour.* Dec. 14.

**A POLAR WHALE** upon an average, yields about 120 bbls oil. We have collected facts showing that eight ships, which visited the Anadir Sea and Arctic Ocean, took 152 whales, yielding 19,100 bbls of oil, or one whale 119 bbls.

The proper time for whaling in the Anadir Sea and Arctic Ocean.

FIRST WHALE.	LAST DO.
Jefferson, June 1.	Aug. 24.
N. America, June 17.	Aug. 23.
Robin Hood, May 7.	Aug. 25.
Nimrod, May 27.	Aug. 24.
George, May 23.	Aug. 24.
Navy, May 17.	Aug. 26.
Wm. Tell, May 9.	Aug. 26.
Pioneer, May 23.	Aug. 23.
Liverpool, 2d, June 5.	Aug. 25.
Cortes, May 27.	Sept. 1.
Luminary, June 6.	Sept. 1.
H. Kneeland, May 18.	Sept. 6.

Honolulu Times.

**THE WHALE FISHERY FOR 1853.**—The last number of The Whaler's Shipping List, published at New Bedford, which by the death of Mr. Henry Lindsey has passed into the hands of Benjamin Lindsey, Esq., contains its annual full review of the Whale Fishery, embracing much valuable statistical information. The shipping List says:

The trade continues to sustain itself, with even less than the fluctuations incident to most branches of commerce. The importation has been larger than that of any year since 1848. There have been 235 ships cruising in the Northern seas during the year, against 283 in 1852, showing a diminution of 48 ships.

Prices have continued during the year to range high, and there is no reason to anticipate any large variation from established rates in the year to come. The project of the Secretary of the Treasury, for the admission free of duty of foreign oils, may, if sanctioned by Congress, have its influence upon the market. In 1851, when whale oil, it will be remembered, ranged unusually high, the import of Linseed Oil reached over 30,000 barrels.

Only two ships are certainly known to have been lost during the last year, although there is reason to believe that another will be added to the list by coming advices, from the Northern seas.

The large quantities of whalebone which have been shipped home in anticipation of return voyages will reduce the amount to be received during the present year, as the catch, this season, will barely come up to the average.

We find the following tables in the Shipping List:—

## NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY.

Table showing the number of ships engaged in the Pacific Fishery for the last twelve years, and the average quantity of oil taken.

1841	20 ships averaged 1412 bbls—	28200 bbls
1842	29 ships averaged 1627 bbls—	47200 bbls
1843	108 ships averaged 1349 bbls—	145600 bbls
1844	170 ships averaged 1528 bbls—	259760 bbls
1845	263 ships averaged 933 bbls—	245079 bbls
1846	292 ships averaged 889 bbls—	259588 bbls
1847	177 ships averaged 1659 bbls—	293643 bbls
1848	169 ships averaged 1164 bbls—	195684 bbls
1849	155 ships averaged 1334 bbls—	206770 bbls
1850	144 ships averaged 1692 bbls—	243648 bbls
1851	138 ships averaged 626 bbls—	86488 bbls
1852	278 ships averaged 1343 bbls—	373354 bbls

In 1853, about 235 ships cruised in the Northern Seas, two of which were lost.

The total amount of Sperm and Whale oil, and Whalebone imported into the United States during the year 1853, is as follows:—

Bbls. Sperm Oil.	Bbls. Whale Oil.	Lbs. Bone
103,977	26,114	5,552,300

There have been no exports of Whale Oil from the port of New Bedford during the years 1852, and 1853.

## STOCK OF OIL AND BONE ON HAND.

The following Table will show the amount of Sperm and Whale Oil on hand on the first day of Jan. 1854, as nearly as can be ascertained in this district and Nantucket.

	Sp.	Wh.	Bone.
Dts. N. Bedford and Nant.	2,880	15,140	660,630

We understand that a considerable quantity of Whale Oil is now held at the Westward, the precise amount of which we have not been able learn.

## VESSELS EMPLOYED IN THE WHALE FISHERY, Jan. 1, 1854.

	Ships & Barks.	Brigs.	Schs.	Tonnage.
New Bedford	346	1	1	107,512
Fairhaven	49			16,754
Westport	17	5		4,300
Dartmouth	3			714
Mattapoisett	11	4		3,013
Sippican			2	
Wareham	1			374
Dis. N Bedford	297	10	3	132,966
Sandwich		1	1	292
Falmouth	3			1,106
Holmes Hole	4			1,530
Edgartown	10			3,402
Nantucket	44	2	1	15,571
Provincetown	3	4	20	3,065
Beverly	3	2		999
Lynn	1			323
Salem	1			330
Boston	1			261
Truro		1		143
Orleans	1	3	1	654
Gloucester			1	110
Fall River	4			1,144
Warren	17			2,300
Providence	1			298
Newport	4			1,742
New London	46	2	7	16,938
Mystic	9		3	2,239
Stonington	18		1	5,843
Sagharior	18	2		6,292
Greenport	9	1		2,973
Cold Spring	7			2,919
Total Jan 1, 1854.	602	28	34	208,929

Showing an addition of 2 ships, and 6 schooners, and a diminution of 2 brigs, and an increase in the aggregate of tonnage, 1743 tons

	Ships & Barks.	Brigs.	Schs.	Tonnage.
Massachusetts	472	23	27	161,796
Rhode Island	23		11	8,009
Connecticut	23	2		26,040
New York	24	3		12,184
	602	28	38	208,929

Jan. 6, 1854

## REVIEW OF THE WHALE-FISHERY---1869.

We lay before our readers to-day our Twenty-Sixth Annual Review of the Whale-fishery of the United States.

The year 1869 has not proved a satisfactory one to those engaged in the Whale-fishery. It opened with good prices for Oils and Bone, which were well sustained through the Summer, since which time, owing to increased stocks, depression in business everywhere, caused by the New York gold panic in September, and the favorable news from the Arctic Ocean, there has been a general decline to present quotations of \$1.55 for Sperm, 70 cents for Humpback, 85 cents for Arctic Oil, and 85 cents, gold, for Arctic Bone, equal to about \$1 currency. The decline for the year being about 25 per cent. During the Summer about 25,000 bbls. refined Seal Oil were imported from the Provinces, and bought here by our manufacturers, thereby displacing from consumption an equal quantity of Whale Oil, which is now held by our importers, and which accounts for the excess of the present stock over that of a year ago. The Seal oil which is of inferior consistency to Whale, is said to have been largely mixed with Whale and Lard Oils, thereby prejudicing the reputation of pure Whale and Lard Oils. The increased import of Whale Oil in 1869 over 1868, was mainly owing to the sending home from the Sandwich Islands of oil caught in the previous years, only about 3,000 bbls. having been carried North by the fleet in 1869, against 14,000 bbls. in 1868. The generally unprofitable results of voyages terminated during the year, coupled with the low prices now ruling, are not favorable to the present fitting of the vessels in port which constitutes over one-sixth of our small fleet.

Of the 102 whalers that have arrived during the year, only about one-quarter may be said to have made profitable returns, even those, at present prices, would barely have saved their owners from a loss.

The new year opens with another reduction in the fleet, both in number of vessels and tonnage. The whole number of American vessels engaged in the Whale-Fishery January 1st, 1870, is 218 ships and barks, 22 brigs, 81 schooners, with 73,137 tons, against 223 ships and barks, 25 brigs, 88 schooners, with 74,519 tons, same time in 1869, showing a decrease of 5 vessels and 1,382 tons, only 25 of which grows out of re-measurement. As showing the extraordinary falling off in ten years, we give the following figures:

	Ships & Barks.	Brigs.	Schs.	Tonnage.
1870,	218	22	81	73,137
1860,	508	19	42	176,842

an apparent difference of 103,705 tons, but owing to loss by re-measurement, the actual loss in tonnage is 93,095 tons; showing in the ten years a decrease of 55 per cent. We predict a further deduction in the fleet the present year, unless prices materially improve. At present there are eight whalers at this port for sale, and a large number of schooners at Provincetown and other ports.

The Atlantic fishery, taken as a whole, was less successful than in former years, the average catch being 12 per cent. less than for three years previous, while the instances of good catches have been largely reduced.

The fleet to cruise in the North and South Atlantic, will not probably exceed 125 vessels, against an average of three years previously, of 154 vessels. This being brought about by the reduced average catch and reduced prices, and is chiefly shown in the Provincetown, where seven have all ready been withdrawn, and fifteen others are in port there, a number of which it is contemplated withdrawing.

The Indian Ocean, New Holland and Sooloo Sea grounds have been visited by the usual number of vessels, but only a few have been more than moderately successful.

The Pacific fleet has been well distributed on New Zealand and the West Coast, but has not been as successful as for a few years past, some have done well, but the average has been moderate. Five of the New Zealand fleet changed their cruising grounds and went Humpbacking, and were successful in taking an average of 750 bbls. A single vessel, the bark Camilla, has been cruising on the old Japan ground with fair success.

The North Pacific fleet of 1869, comprised 44 American and 6 Foreign ships, 50 in all; the number anticipated in our last Review, against 68 vessels in 1868. Owing to the scarcity of whales in the Arctic early in the season, many gave their attention to the capturing of Walrus, and about 4,000 bbls. of oil were taken from them; and, as in the previous year, it was not until late in August that the whales were found in abundance at Point Barrow, where all present got good fares of oil, the only barrier thereto being the extreme cold. The catch was large for the small fleet engaged, and gave an average of 990 bbls. oil and 14,000 lbs. bone. The fall short in bone is owing to the Walrus oil (which has no bone with it,) being included in the Whale. Only one vessel went to Bristol Bay, where she got 500 bbls. whale oil and 2,000 lbs. bone, and but 6 to the Ochotsk Sea, where whales were scarce, the entire catch being 2,575 bbls. oil, and 21,800 lbs. bone, the average being smaller than for many previous years.

The Cumberland and Hudson Bay fishery was very unsatisfactory, but one fair catch having been made of 650 bbls. after an absence of nearly 18 months. Of the six vessels wintering there, 5 are owned at New London, the other at this port. The brig Oxford, of Fairhaven, was totally lost in the Inlet, and the bark Odd Fellow, of New London, on her passage to the Inlet.

The Desolation Elephant fishery has been satisfactory to those who have pursued it, it being a specialty at New London.

The Tristan, Crozettes and Desolation grounds were visited by several of our whalers last Winter, where they found few whales and bad weather, and in two instances only were good catches made.

The fleet the present year will be distributed about as follows:—In the North and South Atlantic, 125 vessels; Indian Ocean, 41 do.; and Pacific Ocean, 65 do.; making 231 vessels which are chiefly sperm whaling. In Hudson Bay and Cumberland Inlet, 6 vessels; on Desolation, elephanting, 5 do.; and in the North Pacific, 44 American and 7 Foreign do., a total of 62 vessels exclusively right whaling. There are 13 vessels outward bound, and 11 homeward bound; and of the number to go North the coming season, 18 vessels will be on their fourth, fifth and sixth seasons, an unusual number, involving a larger outlay than if fitted at home ports.

The year opened with a good demand for Sperm Oil at \$1.75, and rose before the close of January to \$2, and the market continued steady into June, when the price gradually receded to \$1.75, after which there was a steady decline to the close of the year, sales being made at \$1.55 per gallon.

Whale Oil opened at \$1 per gallon, and rapidly rose to \$1.20, when, upon the Spring arrivals with a large supply, the price gradually receded to \$1 and \$1.05 for Northern, at which price it continued steady until the Fall months, when it further receded to 85 to 90 cents, which were the ruling prices at the close.

Whalebone opened at 75 cents, gold, for new, and 80 cents, gold, for old Arctic, with considerable sales, and promptly advanced from 85 cents to \$1, gold, early in March; during the Summer months the market remained steady, at about \$1.30, currency, until October, when sales were made at \$1, gold, for Arctic, and 82 to 83 cents, gold, for South Sea. Since then there has been a general decline, closing at 85 cents, gold, for Arctic, and 75 cents, gold, for South Sea.

The English Review of their Oil Market for 1869, is encouraging, as it foreshadows a good demand for our staples. At the commencement of the year the stock of Sperm Oil was 5,300 bbls., and there was in transit from this side, 10,000 bbls., whereas at the opening of this year their stock was but 6,000 bbls. and nothing going forward. The import in to London in 1869, was 7,200 bbls. from the Colonies, and 25,500 bbls. from the United States, a total of 32,700 bbls., all of which was cleared for consumption excepting 700 bbls. The information received here from their Colonies as well as the Talcahuano fleet (from which they have drawn considerable supply) lead us to believe that their increased supply for the past two years of Colonial oil cannot be relied upon for the future. About 4,500 bbls. whale oil were imported during the year, and the market closed very firm at £39 to £40 per tun, with but little remaining in first hands. We think we can safely anticipate a good demand for Sperm Oil the present year.

The imports in 1869, were 47,936 bbls. sperm, 85,011 bbls. whale oil, and 603,603 lbs. bone, against 47,174 bbls. sperm, 65,575 bbls. whale oil, and 900,850 lbs. bone in 1868, showing a marked increase in whale oil, owing to the sending home of oil taken in previous years, but a decrease in whalebone of about one-third.

The exports in 1869, were 18,645 bbls. sperm, 3,842 bbls. whale oil, and 311,605 lbs. bone, against 18,619 bbls. sperm, 9,885 bbls. whale oil, and 707,882 lbs. bone in 1868, showing a large decrease in whale oil and whalebone.

The home consumption of sperm oil in 1869, was 17,239 bbls.; of whale oil, 56,236 bbls., and of whalebone, 197,098 lbs., when in 1868 it was 19,055 bbls. sperm, 72,390 bbls. whale oil, and 246,908 lbs. whalebone. The decrease in the consumption of Whale oil being consequent upon the large import (and consumption) of seal oil, which we have reason to believe will not be repeated.

The stock of oil and whalebone on hand January 1st, 1870, was 25,052 bbls. sperm, 41,633 bbls. whale oil, and 294,900 lbs. whalebone, against 13,000 bbls. sperm, 16,700 bbls. whale oil, and 200,000 lbs. whalebone, same time in 1869.

The imports for 1870 we estimate will be 45,000 bbls. sperm, 65,000 bbls. whale oil, and 650,000 lbs. whalebone.—*N. B. Shipping List.*

Feb. 5, 1870

Jan. 27, 1851



## Whaling in 1874.

The Annual Review of the Whale Fishery, which may be found at length in the issue of the *Whalemen's Shipping List* for January 19th, is a document which still possesses much interest for Nantucketers, particularly the elderly portion of them. When we compare the statistics of this business with those of forty years ago, when it was the business of our port, and our boys were all brought up to some avocation directly or indirectly connected with Pacific Ocean voyages, the comparison is curious and suggestive. The decrease in the whaling fleet during the past year has been but a small one, there being 163 vessels in the business against 171 a year ago. Of this number, 119 were at sea, on the first of January, 1875. There have been very few shipwrecks during the year, and even those ships which visited the Arctic regions have been quite free from disasters.

Of the 19 whalers now in the port of New Bedford, 13 will be fitted out the coming spring; and of those to arrive during the year, nearly all will be sent to sea again.

The *Shipping List* says: Although the past year has not been one of large profits to our whalers, we are able to state today that the business wears a more cheerful aspect, with a promise of a brighter future. The number of profitable voyages arriving was not greater than during the previous year, but with better prices prevailing, a more hopeful feeling has been engendered. The decrease of the fleet (about 3400 tons during the year) is gradually resulting in a better average catch, experience showing that any decided increase in the number of vessels engaged in the business must eventually bring about lower prices and small average catches.

It thus appears that the New Bedford merchants still have faith enough to keep their fleet going; confident that a small number of vessels may still do a profitable business. We can but admire their pluck and enterprise, and earnestly hope that their ventures may prove successful.

As regards particular grounds; the whalers in the Arctic last season did well, fifteen ships averaging 1165 barrels each, which was about double the average for 1873. But the Ochotsk Sea, which considering its small extent, proved, for a series of years, one of the richest whaling grounds ever opened to Yankee enterprise, appears to have been completely worked out. Nine ships visited this sea last summer and their united catches would hardly make more than a good season's work for one.

Very little has been done in Hudson's Bay and Cumberland Inlet; while southern right whaling, as a business, seems to have been nearly or quite abandoned.

Sperm whaling on the West coast of South America and "Off-Shore Ground" has been better than usual the last year; but the best work is still done in the Atlantic Ocean. Humpbacking, in various parts of the world, is pursued quite extensively.

It appears that the largest number of vessels employed in the whaling business at one time was in 1854, since which time the number has steadily declined from 668 vessels to 163 at the present date. About one-half of those 668 vessels belonged to New Bedford, and a large proportion of them were fitted for the North Pacific cruising-grounds. The whole fleet on those same grounds last summer numbered only twenty-seven ships! But our whaling from Nantucket, as every one knows, began to decline long before the time mentioned above as the zenith of the business; for our culminating point was reached about the year 1841-2, at which time we sent out about ninety ships, nearly all of which were sperm whalers on long voyages

in the Pacific. Our younger people, looking at our deserted and tumble-down piers to-day, cannot possibly realize the appearance of things at that period.

Though our business in this specialty is now entirely gone, we still feel an interest in the subject, and hope to see it kept alive at New Bedford, or elsewhere. There is still enough left of whaling to warrant the continued publication of the *Shipping List*, a paper devoted to this specialty, which informs us that the present is the thirty-first Annual Review of the whalefishery issued from its office.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1875.

## THE WHALE FISHERY.

The annual review of the whalefishery by the *Whalemen's Shipping List* shows that the Arctic season was a failure—the worst ever known—only 72 whales being taken. Vessels in the Japan and Ochotsk seas, and on Kodiak did better, 47 whales being taken in the former and 25 on the latter ground.

Sperm whalers in the Pacific and in the North and south Atlantic did fairly well.

The North Pacific fleet of 1890 will number 46 vessels, of which 15 will go to the Japan and Ochotsk seas, Bristol Bay and Kodiak, leaving only 31 for the Arctic.

The present fleet of whaling vessels numbers only 97, a much smaller number than was formerly owned in Nantucket, and the smallest that has been known for fifty years.

Right whale oil sold for 35 to 38 cents, and is now held at 45. The prices of sperm oil ranged from 69 at 73 cents. Refiners purchased crude sperm oil during the year amounting to 13,000 barrels, against 22,000 last year, while the importations amount to 5,800 barrels, against 1,350 last year. Whalebone has ruled high, opening at \$3.25, and reaching \$3.50 in June. When the result of the Arctic failure was known it gradually advanced to \$4.50. An importer at Dundee, Scotland, has about 17 tons which is firmly held at \$6.

The importations in 1854 were very large, viz: 76,696 barrels of sperm oil; 319,837 barrels of whale oil; and 3,445,200 pounds of bone. In 1889 the importations were 18,727 barrels of sperm; 14,247 barrels of whale; and 253,115 pounds of bone. From 1854 to 1889 there has been an almost steady decline of imports until it is shown to have decreased 87 per cent. Of the tonnage employed in the whalefishery there has been a falling of from 176,848 tons in 1860, to 22,718 tons in 1890.

When it is remembered that Nantucket was so long known as the home of the whalefishery, the fact that not a single craft hailing from this port now ploughs the sea in pursuit of leviathan, impresses one who has shared in the activities of that oleaginous period with a feeling akin to that of the weary traveller on the plains of Babylon, in his wondering where all that was once so great and flourishing then was.

## THE INQUIRER

MONDAY, APRIL 4, 1853.

**NEW WHALING COMPANY.**—We announced two or three weeks ago that the ship *Lexington* of this port had been sold for \$12,000, to go to New York, to load for California. We are glad now to be able to state that she has been re-sold to a Company in this town for \$12,600, who will immediately fit her for the Arctic Ocean. This Company has been some time in pursuit of a ship for the whaling business, and we think they have done well to secure the *Lexington*, even by paying this little advance in price. At a meeting of the Company on Thursday evening last, Mr. Edward W. Perry and Capt. Edward McCleave, two of our most active citizens, were chosen agents for getting the ship to sea. We learn that a grand spirit prevailed at the meeting of the Company, and that they will probably purchase a second ship in a few weeks for the same business. It is understood we believe, that the *Lexington* is to be commanded by Capt. Peter C. Brock, an experienced and heretofore successful whaling captain.

A spirit of enterprise appears to be springing up here at last, among our young merchants, which is highly commendable, and which should be encouraged by the older portion of the community who desire to retire from active business life. Let our whaling fleet be increased to one hundred sail of ships, and this is a small number considering the amount of capital we have here, and with only a fair share of success, together with the other business which is growing up here, Nantucket would be one of the most flourishing communities in this commonwealth. It is the young men of a community which form its bone and sinew, and unless they are active, industrious and enterprising, any place, we care not where, or how it is situated, will very speedily go to decay.

There is a spirit here among many of the more wealthy, and the fact compels us to say so, to hold back; a great want of enterprise and public spirit, which will kill our place dead beyond recovery unless new life be infused. What is it but this stupor which gives our wharves, at the present time, such a sad and deplorably dilapidated appearance? Is it not a want of enterprise in a business which has brought to Nantucket all the wealth she possesses? Who will deny it! The whaling business should not be suffered to decrease here,—New Bedford is getting immensely rich by it—our ships should not be permitted to be sold away from the place. Quite too much of this deadening influence has already operated here, and we are now reaping the consequences. Let the young merchants purchase the ships which are offered for sale from time to time, procure new ones, and send them, as New Bedford has done, to the Arctic Ocean, or anywhere else where oil and bone can be obtained, and very soon this spirit of doing-nothingness which has too long prevailed here will give place to enterprise and energy.

Our facilities for doing business may be increased greatly, and if the capitalists desire it, young merchants may be induced to do business here; but a spirit of confidence and a desire to encourage them must prevail to a greater extent than it has done for a few years past. We have had reverses it is true, and so have other places, but all business must not consequently cease if we purpose to remain here. We sincerely desire that the same enterprise which has held the *Lexington* here, and started, recently, new branches of industry in our midst, may continue to be felt, until we are, as we once were, a happy and thriving community. This is a matter which our young

merchants can control, and will control in their own way. It is for them to say whether Nantucket shall be a business place, with a contented, happy and growing people, or whether it shall continue to decay until business becomes entirely extinct; and the present is as good a time to settle this question as any we shall ever have.

Since the above article was written the ship *Nauticon* which arrived a few days since has been sold to New Bedford. She was owned by Messrs. G. & M. Starbuck & Co., of this place, who have grown rich in the whaling business. So we go.

## INQUIRER AND MIRROR MARINE JOURNAL. PORT OF NANTUCKET.

Saturday, May 6th.  
SAILED AND ARRIVED—Steamer Island Home, Manton, Woods Holl.  
ARRIVED—Schs. Phebe, Rathburn, Noank; Emma, Fitch, Noank; sloop Thomas R. Crocker, Lamb.  
SAILED—Schs. Jacob S. Allen, Nickerson; sloop Charles Everson, Marston, Cotuit.

Monday, May 8th.  
SAILED AND ARRIVED—Steamer Island Home, Manton, Woods Holl.  
SAILED—Schs. Emma, Fitch; Phebe, Rathburn; Adell, Childs; sloops Thomas R. Crocker, Lamb; Juliet, Fitch.

Tuesday, May 9th.  
SAILED—Steamer Island Home, Manton, Woods Holl.  
ARRIVED—Steamer Verbena, Gibbs, Woods Holl.  
Wednesday, May 10th.  
SAILED—Steamer Verbena, Gibbs.

Thursday, May 11th.  
SAILED AND ARRIVED—Steamer Island Home, Manton, Woods Holl.

Sld from New Bedford 4th, sch Abbie Bradford, Hudson's Bay; 8th, sch Wm Martin, (of Boston) Martin, Atlantic Ocean. 9th, bark Ohio, Ellis, Atlantic Ocean.

Bark Sarah, which arrived at New Bedford 3d inst, is being refitted to sail on a sperm whaling voyage in the Atlantic ocean, to sail about the 20th inst under command of Capt Joseph D. Silva.

Bark Marcella, recently arrived, is to be fitted for a sperm whaling voyage, to sail during the present season under command of Capt Frederick F. Tripp, late her first officer.

Bark Thomas Pope, 323 tons, formerly employed in the whalefishery from New Bedford, and sold in December, 1863, has been purchased, it is reported, by Edgartown parties, who will fit her for whaling.

Bark Mermaid, of Westport, at New Bedford, is fitted for a sperm whaling voyage, to sail in June, under command of Capt Geo E Allen, late her first officer.

A letter from Capt Winslow, of bark Com Morris, of NB, reports her at sea March 20, having taken 320 bbls sp oil this season; took one whale which stowed down 160 bbls. Reports bark Pacific, Borden, with 100 bbls this season; Janus, Gifford, 450 sp all told. Heard from, bark C W Morgan, Tinkham, NB, having taken 3 whales. Was bound to Fayal; expects to be in by April.

A letter from San Francisco dated April 25th, reports ship *Marengo*, Kelley, of NB, at Onnalaska, April 7th, all well, bound north.

A letter from Capt Jacob A Howland, dated Valparaiso April 1st, reports at Talcahuano, no date, bark John Carver, Dean, NB, with 240 bbls oil. Arrived at Valparaiso March 28th, bark Mariposa, with 50 bbls sp and 800 do wh oil. At Caldera, no date, bark Mary, with 190 bbls sp and 900 wh oil.

A letter from Capt Gifford, of bark Oak, of New York, reports her at Valparaiso March 24, where she would recopper; had taken 70 bbls sp oil since leaving Panama. Reports spoke March 18th, lat 36 30, lon 75 W, bark Morning Star, Lewis, NB, 130 sp since leaving Valparaiso, bound to Talcahuano soon; spoke March 18th, bark Napoleon, Turner, NB, boiling an 80 bbl sp whale. The John Carver, Dean, NB, John P West, Manchester, do, and Atlantic, Brown, do, were on the ground, the latter bound to Talcahuano to seek freight.

A letter from Capt Weeks, late of wrecked schooner *Palma*, of NB, dated Brava, April 1st, states that he had taken command of sch *Fleetwing*, of NB, and would sail about April 15th, direct for New Bedford, with 37 passengers.

A letter from Capt Atkins, of sch *Azate*, of Provincetown, reports had taken 140 bbls oil since last report, making 360 bbls, 229 of which is sperm. Reports sch *Lottie Cook* with 150 bbls and Ellen Rispah with 175 bbls. The letter was dated Grenada, April 8th, 1876.

At Honolulu April 7th, barks Rainbow, Cogan, N B; Camilla, Ludlow, diag.

Sld from do Meh 27th, barks Onward, Lapham, NB, for the Arctic; April 1st, Java 2d, Fisher, do, for Kodiak; 6th, Northern Light, Smith, do, for the Arctic. Sld fm Table Bay, CGH, March 14th, bark Roman, Rogers, of and for New London.

At Honolulu April 20th, barks Josephine, Hamill, NB, 100 sp; Acors Barns, Hickmott, do, 130 do do. Sld from St Helena, no date, bark R W Wood, Nichols, NB.

SPOKEN.  
Meh 27, (by bark Com Morris) bark *Lancer*, Dowden, NB, 270 bbls sp this season.

May 1, lat 30, lon 78 14, sch Chas Thompson, Leach, of Provincetown, 15 days out, with 75 bbls sp oil.



WHALING STATISTICS.—Samuel B. Tuck, Esq., of New York, has sent us some valuable statistics relative to the whaling, among which are the following:

The number of deaths on the voyages given, was, captains, 32; mates, 25; seamen, 153, as follows: Essex, 16; John Adams, 6; Lady Adams, 18; Globe, 10; Franklin, 5; Statira, 7; Reaper, 21; Manchester, 17; Thule, 12; Oeno, 20; Scotland, 9; others, 12; a total of 210.

Mr. Tuck has figured up the total amount of oil obtained on the voyages, which differs somewhat from the figures of Captain Charles H. Coleman, recently published. He estimates the sperm oil at 1,105,121 barrels; whale oil, 253,164 barrels; total, 1,358,285 barrels. From these figures it will be seen that the total amount is 41,392 barrels less than our first report.

On the arrival of the Sperm, in 1823, her sperm oil sold at 38 cents per gallon; on arrival of the Alabama, in 1850, her sperm oil sold at \$1.26 per gallon; on arrival of the Mohawk, in 1854, her oil sold at \$1.50 per gallon.

The ships that sailed in 1832, landed the largest quantity of oil, 46,038 barrels sperm and 13,490 whale; total, 59,528 barrels. The ships that sailed in the last nine years of the business, 1861 to 1869—landed 7,328 barrels sperm, and 1800 barrels whale oil. Nine hundred and forty-six voyages were accomplished, of which 855 were ships, 42 brigs, and 49 schooners. Sixteen ships each landed 3000 barrels, and over; 1 ship 3450; 1 ship 3500; and 1 ship 6000 barrels; 171 voyages landed 2000 barrels and over; 16, 2500 and over; 21, 2600 and over; 9, 2700 and over; 12, 2800 and over; 3, 2900 and over.

During the fifty-five years in which the business was prosecuted, one hundred and eighty-one different ships, twenty-one brigs and fourteen schooners were employed. The largest number of vessels employed at any one time, was one hundred and eleven ships, seven brigs and three schooners.

Mr. Tuck says he was individually concerned in thirteen ships, and they made thirty-six voyages, landing 49,505 barrels of sperm, and 8,483 barrels of whale oil.

Ship Rambler, on her first voyage, obtained and shipped home seventy barrels sperm oil from the Cape de Verd islands, by a vessel bound to Alexandria, D. C. The Collector of that port refused to deliver the oil till duty as a foreign article was paid upon it, and it was not until after a long and sharp correspondence between the owners and the Collector, that the oil was given up.

Ship Susan, on Japan, was on fire in the fore hold, forty-eight hours, her crew on deck during all that time; fortunately she was in company with the ship Rose. On her arrival home it was found four of her lower deck beams were burnt nearly off, and she had to be built anew from the fore hatches to the bow; knees, carlines and planking on the lower deck, and planks on the upper deck.

Apr. 15, 1876

#### The Continued Decline of Whaling.

The review of the whale fishery for the twelve months just past, 1873, is quite suggestive, and with us who remember the days when the business was in its prime, begets a feeling of sadness, almost of melancholy, at the thought that the business may, ere many years, be talked of as one of the lost arts.

The whole whaling fleet of the United States consists now of only 171 vessels, or about one-fourth the number employed in 1854, which was 668, and these figures show a decrease within the year just past, of 32 vessels, or nearly 7000 tons of shipping, by sale and wreck.

Nantucket, the name of which town was until recently, associated and identified with the name of this adventurous calling in the mind of every one, has, during the past year, disappeared entirely from the field of competition; her last vessel having been sold in a foreign port, to close up an unprofitable voyage. The time which might be called the zenith of the whaling business, as a whole, was about the years 1853 and 1854; but the decline of whaling from Nantucket dates back to a period some years earlier than this, the highest figure of our fleet being about the year 1841, when we owned 92 ships and several smaller craft all in pursuit of leviathan.

And there seems nothing encouraging in the outlook for the future, either in the way of high price for the products of the fishery, or in any increased catch which might be supposed to result from the great falling off in the number of ships employed in it. For we learn that during the past year, 64 vessels have arrived at home ports, of which but a very small percentage have been successful enough to pay any profit to their owners. And but very few of those now in port are likely to be fitted out again, so that another year to come must show a great and continued diminution of the fleet. Of twenty-four vessels now at New Bedford, the *Standard* says, not more than one quarter will be sent to sea; and at New London, a port until recently largely engaged in right-whaling, the seven vessels now at the wharves are all for sale!

It appears that the sperm whalers have been only tolerably successful the past year. Many of them have turned their attention to humpbacking "between seasons," and a considerable quantity of humpback oil has been secured, particularly on the African coast and in Panama Bay. The right whale fishery in Cumberland Inlet and Hudson's Bay may be called, on the whole, a total failure. There is but one American whaler now up there, and she has been out nearly six years, receiving supplies from home from time to time.

There are four schooners from New London at or near the South Shetlands, engaged chiefly in sealing, though whaling is also pursued by them as a secondary object of the voyage.

There were thirty-three vessels in the Arctic last year, and two in the Ochotsk Sea. Notwithstanding the good weather and clear sea, the average catch was small, owing to scarcity of whales. Some ships did well by remaining very late, in the month of October, but this was done at great risk, and would not be practicable in a season of ordinary severity. The slaughter of the walrus has been continued as usual, and about 5600 barrels of oil have been taken from these animals.

Of the 171 vessels which make up the fleet, only 120 are actually at sea, January 1st, 1874.

Jan. 24, 1874

#### Whale Fishery at Nantucket.

Whale fishery originated at Nantucket in the year 1690, in boats from the shore.

1715. 6 sloops, 38 tons burden, obtained about 600 barrels of oil, and 11,000 bone, £1,100

1730. 25 sail, from 38 to 50 tons, obtained annually about 3,700 barrels, at £7 per ton 3,200

1748. 60 sail, from 50 to 75 tons, obtained 11,250 barrels at £14 19,684

1756. 80 sail, 75 tons, obtained 12,000 barrels at £18 27,600

1768. 70 sail, 75 tons, obtained 10,500 barrels at £18 23,600

N. B.—Lost ten sail, taken by the French, and foundered.

1770. 120 sail, from 75 to 110 tons, obtained 18,000 barrels at £40 100,000

From 1772 to 1775, 150 sail, from 90 to 180 tons, upon the coast of Guinea, Brazil and the West Indies, obtained annually 30,000 barrels, which sold in the London market at £44 to £45 sterling 167,000

N. B.—2,200 seamen employed in the fishery, and 220 in the London trade.

Peace of 1783. 7 sail to Brazil from 100 to 150 tons obtained 2,100

5 to the coast of Guinea 600

7 to the West Indies 560

At £40 per ton 3,260 16,280

N. B.—No duty exacted in London.

1784. 12 sail to Brazil, obtained 4,000

5 to the coast of Guinea 400

11 to the West Indies 1,000

At £23 to £24 5,400 14,500

N. B.—The price fell by the exaction of a duty in London of £18 3s sterling, per ton.

1785. Now at sea.

8 sail to Brazil

2 to the coast of Guinea

5 to the West Indies

Before the war there were annually manufactured in Nantucket 380 tons of spermaceti candles.\*

\* This state of the whale fishery in Nantucket, was written in the year 1785.

Nov. 16, 1907

#### Sperm Whale Candles Again Being Made on Nantucket.

One of the ancient arts of Nantucket craft is being revived by Joseph Amrein, of the Silver Shop on Federal street—that of making candles from spermacetti. Nearly two centuries ago, Nantucket started to export sperm whale candles that soon became one of the great industries of the island. When burning, the sperm candle produces a pure white light that is smokeless. Mr. Amrein's interesting revival is all the more exciting in that he has secured a supply of the spermacetti wax, which is indeed a scarce commodity today.

July 16, 1949



## The First American Flag in the Thames.

We have had the pleasure of examining a very beautiful, and truly national work, just issued: "Our Flag—The Origin, Progress and History of the Flag of the United States of America"—By Geo. H. Preble, U. S. N. The author, who is a relative, we think, a nephew, of the gallant Commodore Edward Preble of Tripoli fame, seems to have gone into this subject, *con amore*; and we have scarcely ever seen a book of this class, such as may be called a monograph, which showed evidence of more earnest labor to get at the truth, or more extensive and careful historical research. It is also profusely illustrated, with twelve colored plates and a great number of little wood engravings, all bearing upon the subject of flags, standards, and the like; forming an epitome of information upon a very interesting and curious subject. And though the subject is all *flag*, yet the interest—at least of the patriotic or thoughtful reader—will never flag from beginning to end.

Upon a subject which has several times been referred to in our columns at different periods—the question to whom belongs the distinction of having first hoisted the American flag in a British port after the treaty of peace in 1783—the evidence furnished in this new work seems to be clear and conclusive, and to establish the claim of Capt. William Mooers in the old "Bedford" beyond further doubt or cavil. To show the thoroughness of the writer's plan of investigation, which same thoroughness seems to pervade the whole work, we copy his evidence upon this one matter:

The honor of having first hoisted the stars and stripes after the treaty of peace in a British port has been claimed for several vessels, and has been the occasion of considerable controversy, in which claimants for Newburyport, Philadelphia, Nantucket and New Bedford have taken part.

After a careful examination of all the conflicting accounts, I am clearly of opinion that to the ship Bedford of Nantucket, Capt. William Mooers, and owned by William Rotch of New Bedford, must be assigned the honor.

A London periodical, published in 1783, has this account of her arrival in the Thames:

"The ship Bedford, Capt. Mooers, belonging to Massachusetts, arrived in the Downs on the 3d of Feb., passed Gravesend the 3d, and was reported at the custom house on the 6th inst. She was not allowed regular entry until some consultation had taken place between the commissioners of the customs and the lords of council on account of the many acts of parliament in force against the rebels of America. She was loaded with 487 butts of whale oil, is American built, manned wholly by American seamen, wears the rebel colors, and belongs to the island of Nantucket in Massachusetts. This is the first vessel which has displayed the thirteen rebellious stripes of America in any British port. The vessel is at Horsledown, a little below the Tower, and is intended to return immediately to New England."

In a summary of parliamentary debates contained in the same magazine, under date Feb. 7th:

"Mr. Hammet begged leave to inform the House of a very recent and extraordinary event. There was, he said, at the time of his speaking, an American ship in the Thames, with the thirteen stripes flying on board. The ship had offered to enter at the custom house, but the officers were all at a loss how to behave. His motive for mentioning the subject was that ministers might take such steps with the American Commissioners as would secure free intercourse between this country and America."

Another London newspaper of the same date reports the Bedford as "the first vessel that has entered the river belonging to the United States." And an original letter from Peter Van Schaack, dated, London, Feb. 19, 1783, contains this paragraph: "One or two vessels with the thirteen stripes flying are now in the river Thames, and their crew caressed."

The *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1783 corroborates these statements, and says: "Monday, Feb. 3, 1783: Two vessels are entered at the custom house from Nantucket, an American island near Rhode Island; a third ship is in the river. They are entirely laden with oil, and come under a pass from Admiral Digby, the inhabitants having agreed to remain neutral during the war."

If further confirmation of the Bedford being the first to display the stars and stripes in the Thames is necessary, we have it in the following letter from William Rotch, Jr., one of her owners. There is a discrepancy respecting the date of her display of the stars and stripes; but his letter was written nearly sixty years after the event he narrates, and it may be presumed the contemporaneous accounts are right in that respect and that he is wrong.

New Bedford, 8th mo. 3d, 1842.

Dear Friend: In my reply to thy letter of the 21st ult., received last evening, according to the best of my recollection, my father had a vessel built by Ichabod Thomas at North River, just before the Revolution, for himself and Champion & Dickason of London, for the London trade. After the war commenced, she laid at Nantucket several years, until a license was procured for her to go to London, with a cargo of oil. Timothy Folger, commander. Several gentlemen from Boston took passage in her, among whom were the late Gov. Winthrop, Thomas K. Jones, ——— Hutchinson, and some others, whose names I do not recollect.

In 1781, Admiral Digby granted thirty licenses for our vessels to go after whales. I was then connected with my father and S. Rodman in business. Considerable oil was obtained in 1782. In the fall of that year, I went to New York and procured from Admiral Digby licenses for the Bedford, William Mooers, master, and I think the *Industry*, John Chadwick, master. The Bedford sailed first and arrived in the Downs on the 23d of February, the day of the signing of the preliminary treaty of peace between the United States, France, and England; and went up to London and there displayed for the first time the United States flag. The *Industry* arrived afterwards, and was, I suppose, the second to display it. The widow of George Hayley, who did much business with New England, would visit the old Bedford and see the flag displayed. She was the sister of the celebrated John Wilkes.

We sent the sloop *Speedwell* to Aux Cayes, (St. Domingo). She was taken and carried into Jamaica, but her captain was released one day after. By the treaty, the war ceased in that latitude, and she was released, when she showed the first United States flag there. On her return home, everything was very low by reason of the return of peace. We put on board two hundred boxes of candles, and with William Johnson, (whose widow I learned lives at Quassi) as supercargo, sent her to Quebec, where hers was the first United States flag exhibited.

Should thee wish any further information within my recollection, I will freely communicate it.

I am, with love to thy wife,  
Thy Affectionate Friend,  
WILLIAM ROTCH, JUN.

Thomas Kempton of New Bedford, who was living in 1866, said the Bedford was built at New Bedford before the year 1770, probably by James Lowden, as he was the proprietor of the only ship yard there at that time. She was first rigged as a schooner, afterwards changed to a brig, and finally rebuilt, raised upon, furnished with an additional deck, and rigged as a ship. After all these alterations she measured 170 or 180 tons. No portrait of her has been reserved, and her history after this notable cruise is unknown.

The coinciding testimony of several contemporary English periodicals, the discussion in parliament, the evidence of *Barnard's History*, and the agreeing statement of one of her owners, seem conclusive that the Bedford was the first vessel to hoist the stars and stripes in a British port. The honor has, however, been claimed for the ship *United States* of Boston, owned by John Hancock; for a Newburyport ship, the *Comte de Grasse*, Nichols Johnson, master; for the ship *William Penn* of Philadelphia, Capt. Josiah, and for the bark *Maria*, belonging to the owners of the Bedford.

In 1859, there were three veterans living in Nantucket, who well remembered the Bedford, and who were deeply impressed with her departure for England, which, after the sufferings of the long and distressing war, seemed like sending out a harbinger of peace.

The first publication of the terms of a treaty of peace was Jan. 28, 1783, in a postscript of the London papers about a week before the arrival of the Bedford. The king's proclamation was not published until the 15th of Feb., twelve days after her arrival. It is no wonder then when the master of the Bedford appeared and demanded to enter his vessel at the custom house with her cargo of oil, coming from a country and people who were still considered rebels, his appearance should create some consternation. That under the circumstances there should have been some hesitancy in entering her was as natural, as that her arrival should be noted and remembered.

Capt. William Mooers, the master of the Bedford, is traditionally reported as one of nature's noblemen, and his remarkable prowess as a whaler is familiar to all who have made themselves acquainted with that hazardous branch of our national enterprise. Erect and commanding in appearance, standing over six feet, and weighing more than two hundred, he would have been a marked man out of a thousand.

The Madam Hayley, alluded to in Mr. Rotch's letter, was a sister of John Wilkes, and a valuable friend to Boston and America during the revolution. Both she and Mr. Rotch were passengers in the *United States* (one of the claimants for the Bedford's honor) on her return from London to Boston, as appeared on her log-book, which I saw and examined in Boston in 1865. She was a woman of much energy and great mercantile endowments. While in Boston she gave £100 towards building Charlestown bridge, and was granted the privilege of being the first person to pass over it.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 1873.

## Whaling Era Therapy Described At Historical Lecture

"Scrimshanting was the seafaring occupational therapy of the Whaling Era," Miss Helen L. Winslow, librarian at the Whaling Museum, told an audience at the Friends Meeting House on Tuesday afternoon. The carvings of whalebone and whale ivory made by whalers represent the only indigenous American folk art except that of the Indians.

Miss Winslow said that the derivation of "scrimshaw" is obscure, coming perhaps from "skrimshanker" or "scrimshander," an idle, worthless fellow, and now referring to the specialized leisure-time activity which occupied the time and talents of all aboard ship. Owners occasionally complained that scrimshanting interfered with the business of whaling, and masters sometimes restricted it to the fore-castle, or crew's quarters.

Earliest reference to scrimshaw is in the log, in poetry, of the Ship *Muphin*, kept by the third mate Charles Murphey in 1823, Miss Winslow said. Yet Nantucketers were known as expert woodcarvers in the eighteenth century, and whalers from this port must have discovered early the possibilities of whale ivory.

Even the whaler's tools may be considered scrimshaw, said Miss Winslow, for they were hand-made files, saws, and gimlets, fashioned from sailor's needles with ivory and bone parts. Before these could be used however, the teeth must first be softened in brine or hot water, ground, filed, and sandpapered smooth. Designs were pricked on, and colored with India ink, paint, tar, or soot from the tryworks. The more talented craftsmen experimented with inlays of shell, mother-of-pearl, or precious metals.

"The prerequisites of scrimshaw were time, patience, and extreme caution."

Miss Winslow said that whaler's dictionary of ornament was found in his environment—knots in the rigging, the stars, birds, whales, fish, his ship, the wheel, the anchor. Women he copied from Godey's Book. His favorite subjects were scenes of the chase and capture of whales.

"There are no choicer bits of Americana to be collected than these records of heroic deeds."

The Nantucket Whaling Museum, said Miss Winslow, has a representative collection of scrimshaw which includes engraved teeth, busks, jaggings wheels, clothes pins, dippers, cribbage boards, blocks, and fids. Whalers made articles for the home, for the ship, for recreation, and for decoration. Strangely enough, they made very few ship models and candlesticks. Other collections of scrimshaw can be seen at New Bedford, Salem, Mystic, Conn., Sag Harbor, L. I., and Newport News, Va. Many valuable items are owned privately.

"The whaler gave free expression to whatever beauty he felt within. The student of the whaling industry would wonder to find so much feeling actually existed. If part of his work is clumsy, the beauty of the material imparts some degree of charm, so that the least successful of it is not to be passed over lightly, and the best of it ranks among the Fine Arts."

Mr. W. Ripley Nelson, an officer of the Nantucket Historical Association, was chairman for the afternoon. Several choice items of scrimshaw from the Whaling Museum collection were on display, as well as two handsomely inlaid doll bureaus, made by John B. Coffin, a great-grandfather of Mrs. Lewis Edgarton.

Aug. 28, 1954



## Greater Wealth and Prosperity— Nantucket's Whaling Annals.

That Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard are some distance apart geographically is well known, but that they are much further apart in individual history is not, perhaps, as fully understood. It would seem that in the past, at least, the whaling industry would have been a common bond—but not so. Nantucket was always more closely allied with New Bedford in whaling. The reason, no doubt, was in the insular differences between Nantucketers and Vineyarders in general, and the fact that the earliest beginnings of New Bedford found several prominent Nantucketers represented as important figures.

In an editorial titled "Whaling Experience," the *Vineyard Gazette's* able chief editor and author Henry Beetle Hough has championed the cause of the Vineyard whaler. He does not accept a statement that Nantucket whalers had a "greater experience" than those hailing from the Vineyard.

The *Gazette's* editorial states:

"The Nantucket writer, Edouard A. Stackpole, recently observed that 'most of the prosperity of Edgartown' was due to its use as a port of clearance and arrival by the Nantucket whale-ships. We demurred, although recognizing that this use of Edgartown's harbor was mutually advantageous. Now, Mr. Stackpole replies, referring to 'the far greater wealth and experience of Nantucket merchants and whalers in those busy times.' As to the merchants, we think the statement a fair one, but as to the whalers we differ.

[Mr. Hough then cites hundreds of voyages by Vineyard captains, pointing out the fact that few were in Nantucket ships.]

...."Anyone who speaks of the 'greater experience of Nantucket whalers' is open to immediate historical contradiction. Be it noted, also, that so far we have spoken only of whaling masters, which make up only part of the story. What of the harpooners of Gay Head, without whom the annals of whaling cannot be written? Even Nantucket cannot claim to have antedated them!

"It is our impression that Nantucket was a remarkable center of whaling capital, and that it specialized in owning ships rather than sailing them. With the Vineyard it was the other way around, and the fortunes of this Island, which were many and imposing in their day, were almost entirely direct from the sea."

At the risk of being open to "historical contradiction," I would like to reaffirm the statement made in that last reply to the *Gazette*. That statement, in its full text, read:

"But—in reference to whaling prosperity—the Vineyard's business in this respect can only be contrasted with the far greater wealth and experience of Nantucket's merchants and whalers in those busy times."

The proof of this exists in the annals of the American whaling industry itself. When the first settlers came to Nantucket they were taught the art of killing right whales by the Indian inhabitants, but this "shore whaling" was already being practiced by the Long Island settlers. The Vineyarders were doing the same. And when the

Nantucketers sought the whale further from shore it was as natural a step as when the Vineyard husbandman sought to enlarge his farms. The greater productivity of the Vineyard's soil made its settlers more farmer-fishermen than Nantucketers, who had less than one-quarter of farming land available on this island.

In that portion of his editorial in which he refers to the voyages of the Vineyard captains, Mr. Hough declares that very few of the Cottles, Luces, Fishers, Jernegans, Nortons, Peases, etc., took out Nantucket ships as masters. That is true—yet they did not all take out Vineyard ships by far, either, because the Vineyard's fleet was always small, and the shipmasters from that island took out ships from New Bedford, Fairhaven and other ports.

If it comes to the point of totalling voyages by the names of the captains in command of whalers, then the total voyages sailed by the Coffins, Wyers, Swains, Myricks, Barnards, Bunkers, Husseys, Worths, Brocks, Folgers, Whippeys, Gardners, Fosdicks and Pinkhams and other whaling masters from Nantucket would mount into the thousands—practically all in Nantucket ships.

It certainly would be a much more judicious procedure to compare the fleets out of Edgartown and Holmes Hole with the Westport or Mattapoisett fleets. The Vineyard total can not approach those of Provincetown, Stonington, Warren or Providence, or Sag Harbor—by far it never challenged seriously Nantucket's fleet—except in the last years of this island's great decline which came with the Civil War.

If an analogy might be so taken, let us consider the discovery and exploration of Kentucky, the middle West and far West. Many worthy settlers came after Daniel Boone, Simon Kenton, Lewis, Clark, Fremont, Pike, et al, but these sturdy folk were not the pathfinders and explorers—and they never pretended to be. They had to accept the historical fact.

Just so with the Vineyard whalers. Many of them were outstanding, successful and excellent whalers. But the pioneer whalers to the Pacific were Nantucketers—some in the ships of New Bedford and London—they were simply following the precedent set by the Nantucketers in deep-sea whaling from America in the Atlantic. Men like Capt. Frederick Coffin, Edmund Gardner, James J. Coffin, Joseph Allen, Elisha Folger—their names are legion. They were the pioneers—the leaders.

As an example of the comparative importance of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard in the industry during the 18th century, in the years from 1770 to 1775, an average of 65 ships sailed annually from Nantucket for the northern whale-fishery, compared with only 12 Vineyard ships sailing to the north. During the same period, 85 Nantucket ships sailed to the southern grounds, with the Vineyard not being represented at all. The tonnage was 15,025 to 720 in Nantucket's favor—with Nantucket having 2,025 seamen employed to the Vineyard's total of 156. Nantucket ships took 30,000

bbls. of oil compared to the Vineyard's 1,200. This is recorded history.

In 1758, the Council of Massachusetts Bay recognized the Quaker whalers of Nantucket and their problems by allowing them to pursue their whaling voyages notwithstanding the embargo then in force—a privilege not accorded to any other port in the Colony.

It is not unlikely that when Captain Joseph Chase, of Nantucket, went over to the Vineyard in 1738, in his sloop *Diamond*, and built try-works on land purchased at Edgartown, he introduced deep-sea whaling to the Vineyarders. But he was not successful in his venture and abandoned it. The same experience was suffered by John Harper, who went to Edgartown from Nantucket in 1742 in the *Humbird*.

The time came when Nantucket could not furnish men enough to man her growing whaling fleet, and other ports began to supply the necessary man-power. Also, the Nantucketers became in demand by owners of ships in other whaling ports, who wanted them to take their ships out as the captains or officers.

History records the tremendous blow Nantucket suffered through the War of the Revolution. Its fleet of one hundred sail was scattered and practically destroyed; its merchants lost not only invested capital but the physical assets. That the community was able to recover and re-establish itself again as the leading port in world whaling is the best possible proof of the enterprise of its whalers, both officers and men, as well as the ability of its merchants in finance.

When General Grey and the British fleet from Newport burned Bedford in 1779, and then raided the Vineyard, (taking 300 oxen and 10,000 sheep from that island), it found few vessels to destroy in Holmes' Hole and Edgartown.

De Crevécor, Sanson, Davis, Brown, Melville, Macy, and Alexander Starbuck are among the outstanding writers who have extolled the unrivaled story of these Nantucket nimrods of the sea. Edmund Burkes eloquent tribute to them, spoken in Parliament, has become a classic. But their voyages speak for themselves.

Two things gave Nantucket its leadership—the challenge of the sea and the practice of their religion—Quakerism. The strong character, the enterprise of these whalers was enlightened by their strong religion. As Sir Thomas Brown wrote, "for (they) sleep in lions skins in their progress unto Virtue."

Isolated from other communities, obliged to import most of the material things for its existence, the Nantucket settlement developed into the world's greatest whaling port through the courage and perseverance of its hardy people—whalers who went to distant seas, and those who maintained the affairs of the home town.

On a cruise off-shore, Capt. "Kit" Hussey was blown far out to sea by a gale. He sighted a sperm whale in the Gulf Stream. This was in the year 1716. Capt. Hussey lowered, chased the sperm and killed him—thus marking the first accomplishment of its kind. From that time until a century and a half had elapsed, Nantucketers pursued the sperm whale principally. He became the symbol of their prosperity and the power enabling them to maintain the ascendancy over all the whalers on the face of the globe.

The Nantucketers carried the name of their island home into every sea on the globe. They were shipping oil to London in 1732, the year of Washington's birth. In the year that Princeton University was established, the Nantucketers were voyaging as far north as Disco, through the Davis Straits. They were leading the other whalers from American ports into all parts of the Western Ocean—into the Straits of Belle Isle, Hudson's Bay, the Cape Verde's and down to the Falklands. The news of the Battle of Lexington arrived at the same time an island skipper—Captain Bunker—brought home news of his discovery of a new whaling ground—the Brazil Banks.

There is no mistaking the part that all American whalers played in the maritime history of this nation. In the chapters of this history there are pages written by the Vineyarders as well as those from New Bedford, Sag Stonington, Sag Harbor, and other ports, with New Bedford compiling the record of the most ships, most voyages and most money. But the early pages and their fascinating accounts belong to Nantucket, almost entirely.



Nantucket whalers were invited to England and established the important whaling port of Milford Haven in Wales. A Bourbon king of France invited thirty families from this island to Dunkirk, where they maintained another whaling center. It was Joseph Rotch, of Nantucket, who, aided by his sons, added Nantucket ships and capital to Joseph Russell's lands and launched the port of Bedford, later to become New Bedford. Nantucket whalers went 100 miles up the Hudson river to establish the important city of Hudson, N. Y.

The story of Nantucket in the Pacific is one of enterprise unparalleled in the history of whaling. They not only discovered the great whaling grounds there, but they discovered islands, led the way to other ships, established the first importance of the various island groups.

But, to the return once more to my original premise for this account: "In reference to whaling prosperity—the Vineyard's business in this respect can only be contrasted with the far greater wealth and experience of Nantucket's merchants and whalers in those busy times."

—Edward A. Stackpole.

#### Whalers of the Past and of the Present.

It is a good time, though any time is good, to read again Herman Melville's "Moby Dick" and chase with him the White Whale. "Stern all!" yells the husky boatsteerer in the bow as he hurls the harpoon, terribly. The line runs like lightning out of the tub as the struck whale submarines. Keep pouring water on the line, or it will burn the boat. Our cetaceous friend is excited. Give him more rope, another line, and still another, perhaps. He is a stayer. A big and vicious fellow, good for nigh on a quarter of a mile of line. Well, he is fast to the side chains at last, provided he hasn't shown too much temperament and smashed a boat or two. Out with your spades, you lubbers, and work for your share, your "lay" in this and other hard-earned increment of the voyage, your one-hundred-and-fiftieth, or whatever it is, of the proceeds. What did the cabin boy get, that favorite of ancient readers of whalers' yarns? A part small, like himself, but worth working for. Not everybody can be super cargo of an Indiaman, another romantic character of remote youths with saline ambitions.

At this point blubber asserts itself too strongly. The sights and smells are not highly aesthetic. Still, would it ever fall to a cabin boy's lot to go into the whale's mouth, collecting whale-bone? Probably not, but what a joy to sedentary youth to read of four-year-whaling voyages. "There she blows" is a surviving watchword. And whaling is not all grease and blubber-stripping and trying out. Sometimes you anchor off enchanted islands of the South Seas. You make the acquaintance, sometimes you get

an interior view, of cannibals. Salt horse is superseded by wild bananas and baked bread fruit. You sleep under pandanus thatch. Choirs of laughing nymphs, crowned with hibiscus flowers, give you a cabaret show among the tall gray trunks of coconut palms. Even a whaler's life has its beer and skittles and poi.

But we are too far away from Nantucket, which, somehow, seems the heart of the whaling country, if we may say so without injustice to Martha's Vineyard or to "America", as the Nantucketers call Cape Cod and the Massachusetts mainland. It's just a little more than two hundred years ago that Kit Hussey of Nantucket harpooned a sperm whale off the island. The seventeenth century, and the eighteenth century whalers, up to about its middle, whaled from the beach in boats. The right whale was their sole game till after Kit's day, and somewhere about 1750 they began to perambulate the ocean stream in ships and followed the whale toward the ultimate pole, south and north. Nantucket's glories passed to New Bedford.

New London had its prosperous whaling days. All the old whaling ports, and many an interior town of the Cape, still keep reminiscences of this sea hunting. The old race of whaling captains is gone. They walked the sand as if it were a quarter deck. Spyglass to eye, they searched the sea from their cupola observation platforms atop of their houses. Spoils of marine venerie, great ribs of whale, were decorations of their front yards. And, Lord! how they hated a steamer! Their occupation was dwindling. Whales got scarce. Mineral and gas oils crowded out whale oil. Rubber and steel usurped the place of whalebone.

We are reminded of the old and the new whaling by a "Review of the Whale Fishing Industry" in the annual report of the New York Chamber of Commerce. The New England whale fisheries were at their height in 1846, when 680 whalers were registered. In 1914 the number had fallen to thirty-two. The "banner year" of American whaling was 1854, when the tonnage was 198,594. Our total merchant marine tonnage was then about 5,000,000. There was about one ton of whaling to twenty-five tons of merchant shipping. June 30, 1915, the merchant marine tonnage was 8,389,429, the whaling 8,829, a ton to a thousand. Melancholy figures.

In 1846 the whaling tonnage was 38,833. New Bedford alone had 31,000 tons. By 1890 the tonnage had been cut in half. In twenty-five years it has been cut in half again. New Bedford, devoted to the sperm whale alone, has fourteen whalers. The price of sperm oil has risen 10 cents a gallon in the year, whereas the price of whale oil, especially of the Pacific product, the oil of the Humpback, Finback, and Sulphur Bottom—86 feet long, sometimes, this chap—which yields a high percentage, sometimes as much as 14 per cent., of glycerine, an ingredient of explosives, has risen 50 per cent.

Other times, other whalers. None the less, ghosts of old whaling captains, Coffins, Mayhews, Macys, Starbucks, affectionately we salute you!—New York Times.

#### Harpoon Guns Cause Fear For Whale Supply.

The danger that the hunting machinery which changed the whale from big game to big business may exterminate the mammal is recognized in efforts being made to conserve the whale supply.

When whales were hunted with harpoons cast by hand from row-boats, the whale had a sporting chance against his hunters. Some whales were more than a match for the flimsy harpoons. The whale supply kept up with the demand.

To-day harpoons fired from guns, mounted on speedy engine-driven "whale catchers," have made even the giant 100-foot blue whale an easy prey. Whalers and scientists alike fear that whales may be virtually wiped out.

Pending before the United States Senate is an international agreement sponsored by the League of Nations which would prohibit killing of female and young whales. Protect the scarce right whale and require the complete utilization of all whales killed. Norway and Great Britain, leading whaling countries, already have ratified the agreement. Meanwhile the business decline is giving the whales a respite, but even in 1931 whaling companies reported large profits.

The quest of American women for beauty is a chief source of the whale's troubles. When corsets were more generally worn whalebone made the best stiffening material until steel replaced it. Now, with emphasis on soap in beauty recipes, the whale is asked to contribute his oil. Whale oil is an important factor in the American soap industry.

The adventure in whaling largely disappeared with the wooden whaling fleets of a century ago, but whalers still need to be good sailors. In order that the small "whale catcher" boats may whirl, twist, and double back as the whale thrashes at the end of the harpoon rope the boats are built without keel, making them extremely unstable. They are about 120 feet long, with a speed of twelve knots.

The harpoon gun shoots a steel shaft six feet long. In the end are four twelve-inch steel barbs which spring out a 45-degree angle when the harpoon is lodged in the whale's body. In the point is a bomb, timed to explode three seconds after the harpoon is fired.

Whales are the largest creatures ever known larger than any dinosaur remains so far found.—New York Tribune.

#### Ferocious Whales.

The story of the "monstrous bull whale" sinking the New Bedford whaler Kathleen is indeed a thrilling story of the dangerous deep.

Whales in the sea  
God's voice obey,

As the New England Primer feelingly remarks.

The New York Sun in a description of the ramming says: "In all the salty annals of New Bedford and Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket there is but one story like that of the Kathleen."

Now the great sperm whale, the most majestic, is the most formidable of all whales. Herman Melville describes his "pre-eminent tremendousness" in "Moby Dick" and quotes Olason and Povelson "declaring the sperm whale not only to be a consternation to every other creature in the sea, but also to be so incredibly ferocious as continually to be athirst for human blood." In the earlier days of the sperm whale fishery many pursuers of right whales could not be induced to embark for the capture of the more ferocious variety, for they swore that "to chase and point lance at such an apparition was not for mortal man. That to attempt it would be inevitably to be torn into a quick eternity."

Melville gives instances of the destruction of vessels by whales.

In 1820 the ship Essex, Captain Pollard, of Nantucket, was cruising in the Pacific. She saw spouts and boats were lowered. "Suddenly a very large whale escaping from the boats, issued from the shoal, and bore directly down upon the ship. Dashing his forehead against her hull, he so stove her in that in less than 10 minutes she settled down and fell over. Not a surviving plank of her has been seen since. After the severest exposure, part of the crew reached land in their boats."

The ship Union of Nantucket was in 1807 lost off the Azores by a similar attack.

In the early thirties an American sloop-of-war from the Sandwich Islands to Valparaiso was so rammed by a whale that the vessel was obliged, with all pumps going, to make for the nearest port.

Lansedorff in his "Voyages" tells of his ship almost running into a whale. "The gigantic creature, setting up its back, raised the ship three feet at least out of the water." Captain D'Wolf, who was in command, was an uncle of Melville, and in 1851, the date of "Moby Dick," was living "in the village of Dorchester near Boston."

Procopius way back in the sixth century mentions the capture in the Propontis of a great sea-monster, which had destroyed vessels for a period of 50 years.

And Melville claims that if the sperm whale, once struck, is allowed time to rally, he then acts "not so often with blind rage, as with willful, deliberate designs of destruction to his pursuers."—Boston Journal's Talk of the Day.



## THE INQUIRER.

SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 1842.

**THE WHALE FISHERY** Occasional allusion to this, to us most important of all interests, has been made in preceding numbers of our paper, inviting public attention to a diligent consideration of the subject of the Fishery, and suggesting the expediency of a convention of those occupied in its prosecution. We proceed to display a few of the statistics of the business, trusting that our labours will result in arousing our fellow-citizens, both here and elsewhere, to look diligently into the subject and to take measures which shall convince Congress, that they are determined to be heard and to be regarded. If we look but for a moment at the amount of capital employed, and the vast multitude of persons directly or indirectly interested, we shall at once perceive that to us, our State and the nation, this branch of industry, originating in the efforts of a few men, launching their frail boats from the shores of Nantucket, has now become one of the most important of nautical enterprises.—The destruction of this branch of production, this source of individual wealth and national power, the entire subjugation of the hardy spirit of enterprise, which even previous to our Revolution, extorted from the powerful intellect of a Burke, a tribute so complimentary and yet so just, the entire overthrow of every obstacle presented to the triumph of principles, revolting alike to reason and humanity, all are aimed at: and unless the effort for our ruin be met in a spirit, as firm as it is manly, we might as well at once dismantle our ships and allowing them to rot in the idle docks, close our manufactories and kiss the rod, which free trade and chivalric dictation offer for our salvation.

We shall be told of our weakness, that we are but a small part of this mighty republic, that we are raising a tempest in a tea-pot, and that Nantucket, New Bedford, and a few other towns interested, are but a small part of the world, and similar equally interesting and lucid reasons why we should not move in this matter; but we would, considering ourselves duly lectured and to a suitable degree terrified, suggest that unless we do take measures to be noticed, and that too respectfully and advantageously, we neglect the means within our power; and when too late, we may enjoy self-reproach as one more delicious ingredient in the refreshing chalice tendered to our fevered lips.—We do believe that a fair, full and elaborate report on the state of the Fishery, would obtain great attention, and be one solid and useful block in the constructing of a judicious system of home protection, and that it would present one obstacle to the introduction of foreign products to drain us of our earnings and to destroy our own production.

Pass we now to consider, that on the first day of February, 1842, there were owned in this country, more than six hundred sail of vessels engaged in the Whale Fishery, of an aggregate tonnage of 190,374 tons, constituting more than one eleventh of the entire tonnage of the United States; a part of the national marine employed in a service, from its very nature, requiring great perfection both of material and structure, and fairly entitled, from its very extent, to the favourable regards of the whole people. These vessels are of necessity heavily manned, carrying on an average, a man to every fourteen tons, and employing in the aggregate, at least 13,500 men in the actual prosecution of their voyages.

As to the amount of capital invested, we have not the means of obtaining it exactly, and therefore are compelled to resort to an estimate, in which, thanks to the care of a judicious State government, we trust to arrive at an approximation to the truth. According to an abstract of the Returns of the Assessors, rendered to the Massachusetts Legislature, by the Secretary of the Commonwealth, in Feb'y 1838, there was invested in 113,419 tons engaged in the Fishery from this State, a capital of \$9,800,902; if we take this return as the basis of our calculation, we shall find now employed by the nation at large, a capital in shipping, of \$16,450,832. Of the amount of profit obtained from this in-

vestment, we can also speak only from estimate.—By the abstract of the Secretary, above-mentioned, we find that there were imported into this State in the year ending April 1st, 1837, oils valued at \$4,271,470, amounting as we shall see, to nearly 50 per cent of the capital actually afloat in the business,—allowing for variations in success, and all draw-backs, we are justified in concluding from this fact, that the annual importations of all the vessels together, amount to at least one third of the entire capital, say \$5,483,611. That this estimate falls short of the real value of the imports, no one will have a shadow of a doubt, when he considers that the value of the oil and bone brought into the United States during the first six months of the year 1841, was \$4,946,455.

Here then is a business directly involving from sixteen to twenty millions of dollars, employing a host of men and pouring a constant stream of wealth into our country, developing its resources and providing an inestimable arm of defence, about to be sacrificed. Time and space, now fail us; we intend however, to continue these statements, and in the meantime call on our brethren, immediately interested, to be faithful to their trust, and warn our friends of the impending danger.

**DUTIES UPON AMERICAN OIL.** We have received, through the attention of our Representative in Congress, the Hon. Barker Barnell, a very valuable Report on the Commercial Relations of the United States with Foreign Nations &c. From it we extract, as interesting and perhaps useful to a portion of our readers, the following list of the rates of duty laid upon the oils of the United States Fishery, by various foreign nations:

**WHALE OIL.**  
 Argentine Confeder'n: 17 per cent. ad valorem.  
 Austria: 24 40-100 cents per 123½ lbs.  
 Belgium: \$2 30 per 22 gal's.  
 Bolivia: 5 per cent on a valuation, and ¼ per cent to the consular.  
 Brazil: 48½ per cent. on a valuation of \$90 48, per 132 gal's.  
 Central America: 10 per cent on a fixed official valuation.  
 Chili: Whale oil, 10 per cent on a valuation of 32 cents per gallon; Spermaceti, 10 per cent on valuation of 63 cents per gallon.  
 China: not specified.  
 Denmark: \$1 10 per 40 gal's.  
 " Sleswick and Holstein: Spermaceti, free; all others, \$1 11 59-100 per 110 13-100 pounds.  
 Ecuador.  
 France: \$11 51 92-100 per 220 lbs.  
 " West India Possessions.  
 " East " "  
 Great Britain: \$1 27 68 per tun.  
 " Amer'n Possessions: Prohibited.  
 " E. India " "  
 Greece: 10 per cent ad valorem.  
 Hayti: 7 cts. per gallon (10 per cent additional in United States vessels.)  
 Hanseatic cities: In Hamburg, ½ per cent; ¾ per cent in Bremen; in Lubec, ¼ per cent.  
 Italy: 50 cents per 112 Roman pounds (77 lbs avoirdupois.)  
 Mexico: \$1 50 per 101 lbs 12 oz.  
 Muscat: no tariff in the Department.  
 Netherlands: 1½ cent per gallon.  
 " Amer'n Possessions.  
 " East I. " "  
 New Granada: in national vessels, 18 per cent; in foreign vessels, 23 per cent on a home valuation.  
 Peru: 30 per cent on a valuation.  
 Portugal: Common, 39 6-10 cts per 22 pounds; Spermaceti, 79 3-10 cts per 22 pounds.  
 Prussia: \$1 13 82-100 per Prussian cwt. of 113 381-1000 lbs.  
 Russia: 13 cents per gallon.  
 Sardinia.  
 Siam: no Tariff in the Department.  
 Spain: under Spanish flag, 15 per cent on a fixed value of \$1 20 per 3¼ gallons; under foreign flag, a third more; additional consumption duty, one-third of the amount of tariff duty.  
 " Cuba: in Spanish vessels, 20 21-100 per cent, in foreign vessels 28 1-100 per cent, on a fixed value of \$2 per 3¼ gal's; additional, 1 per cent 'balanza,' and one-seventh as war subsidy.  
 " Porto Rico: in national vessels 8½ cents, in foreign vessels 12½ cents per 2 gal's; additional, 1 per cent 'balanza;' ½ per cent 'consulado.'  
 Sweden: 10 per cent. ad valorem; additional, convoy duty, 10 per cent on imports; towage, 2½ per cent on an official valuation.  
 Texas: 30 cents per gallon (Spermaceti.)  
 Turkey: 3 per cent, import duty; 2 per cent (paid by importer) for privilege of selling.  
 Two Sicilies: \$3 20 per cantaro of 196 pounds.  
 Venezuela: 3 cents per pound, with 2 per cent additional, at Laguaira, and 4 per cent at other ports, on total amount of duties, and a further addition of 10 per cent on the total amt under the law of July, 1841.

1842



### Whaling in 1874.

The Annual Review of the Whale Fishery, which may be found at length in the issue of the *Whalemen's Shipping List* for January 19th, is a document which still possesses much interest for Nantucketers, particularly the elderly portion of them. When we compare the statistics of this business with those of forty years ago, when it was the business of our port, and our boys were all brought up to some avocation directly or indirectly connected with Pacific Ocean voyages, the comparison is curious and suggestive. The decrease in the whaling fleet during the past year has been but a small one, there being 163 vessels in the business against 171 a year ago. Of this number, 119 were at sea, on the first of January, 1875. There have been very few shipwrecks during the year, and even those ships which visited the Arctic regions have been quite free from disasters.

Of the 19 whalers now in the port of New Bedford, 13 will be fitted out the coming spring; and of those to arrive during the year, nearly all will be sent to sea again.

The *Shipping List* says: Although the past year has not been one of large profits to our whalemen, we are able to state today that the business wears a more cheerful aspect, with a promise of a brighter future. The number of profitable voyages arriving was not greater than during the previous year, but with better prices prevailing, a more hopeful feeling has been engendered. The decrease of the fleet (about 3400 tons during the year) is gradually resulting in a better average catch, experience showing that any decided increase in the number of vessels engaged in the business must eventually bring about lower prices and small average catches.

It thus appears that the New Bedford merchants still have faith enough to keep their fleet going; confident that a small number of vessels may still do a profitable business. We can but admire their pluck and enterprise, and earnestly hope that their ventures may prove successful.

As regards particular grounds; the whalers in the Arctic last season did well, fifteen ships averaging 1165 barrels each, which was about double the average for 1873. But the Ochotsk Sea, which considering its small extent, proved, for a series of years, one of the richest whaling grounds ever opened to Yankee enterprise, appears to have been completely worked out. Nine ships visited this sea last summer and their united catches would hardly make more than a good season's work for one.

Very little has been done in Hudson's Bay and Cumberland Inlet; while southern right whaling, as a business, seems to have been nearly or quite abandoned.

Sperm whaling on the West coast of South America and "Off-Shore Ground" has been better than usual the last year; but the best work is still done in the Atlantic Ocean. Humpbacking, in various parts of the world, is pursued quite extensively.

It appears that the largest number of vessels employed in the whaling business at one time was in 1854, since which time the number has steadily declined from 668 vessels to 163 at the present date. About one-half of those 668 vessels belonged to New Bedford, and a large proportion of them were fitted for the North Pacific cruising-grounds. The whole fleet on those same grounds last summer numbered only twenty-seven ships! But our whaling

from Nantucket, as every one knows, began to decline long before the time mentioned above as the zenith of the business; for our culminating point was reached about the year 1841-2, at which time we sent out about ninety ships, nearly all of which were sperm whalers on long voyages in the Pacific. Our younger people, looking at our deserted and tumble-down piers to-day, cannot possibly realize the appearance of things at that period.

Though our business in this specialty is now entirely gone, we still feel an interest in the subject, and hope to see it kept alive at New Bedford, or elsewhere. There is still enough left of whaling to warrant the continued publication of the *Shipping List*, a paper devoted to this specialty, which informs us that the present is the thirty-first Annual Review of the whalefishery issued from its office.

Feb. 6, 1875













BRANT POINT AND ENTRANCE TO THE HARBOR  
1820—1842

Beginning at the <sup>Left</sup> right, the ship being built on the stocks is the *Joseph Starbuck*.  
In the cradle on the marine railway with a horse attached to a windlass, is the ship *Planter*.  
To the right of the lighthouse is the bark *Peru*, the first vessel to use the camels, being towed in by the steamer *Telegraph*.  
This picture was painted in oil by James Walter Folger in 1909. Before painting, he gathered all historical data then available. It hangs in the dining-room of the hotel Gordon Folger.



SITE OF THE OLD SHIPYARD

On Brant Point, the arrow points to the location of the shipyard and marine railway. Before it is the water into which the ships were launched. Here the ship *Joseph Starbuck* was built in 1838. Remains of the shipyard are now five feet under the sand.

Three Bricks



## The Old Marine Railway.

A number of house-lots have recently been purchased as sites for summer cottages within the limits of the very piece of land on Brant Point which was for many years occupied as a marine railway and ship-yard. Our younger readers are accustomed to think of Brant Point as a place well enough adapted for a Government beacon, and of the faithful light-keeper as a kind of enforced hermit, living within rather inconvenient reach of civilization, but in a state of quiet and solitude, rarely broken save by some passing steamer or coasting craft. Only such of us as have reached and passed middle age can realize the changes and contrasts of half a century, and remember how the sound of axe and sledge used to ring out in that locality, which after since lying neglected and uncared for is now to be made useful and valuable for purposes of elegant leisure.

This tract of land containing little more than three acres, with a harbor front of four hundred feet on the south line was set off by the proprietors in 1830 to Philip H. Folger, and being by him transferred in shares to several others, his associates, the necessary buildings, launch-ways and machinery were soon put in place, and the organization known as the Nantucket Marine Railway Company found no reason in those stirring days to complain of dull times or lack of business. Besides the ships sailing and returning on long Pacific voyages, our fleet of coasting vessels was then a large one, for sailing craft did the work which would now-a-days be done by steamers and rail-roads in the way of transportation. There were always some vessels waiting repairs, and for many years the ways at Brant Point were seldom unoccupied. But this was not all, for the spirit of enterprise was rife at that period, and several new ships and other smaller vessels were built in the Brant Point ship-yard, the material for that purpose being brought to the island in vessels, and a pier or wharf built outward into the harbor for convenience of loading and discharging. The ship Charles Carroll was launched from this yard in 1832, and the boyish enthusiasm of that hour is still fresh in our memory. In 1836 two fine ships, the Nantucket and the Lexington were growing up at the same time, side by side, and a large force of workmen were employed upon them, for in those years many ship carpenters from the Cape and elsewhere moved with their families to our island and became citizens. How interested we boys of that date were in the completion of these two great ships! How knowingly we compared and discussed their models, and the fine points of each, and what a disappointment when the Nantucket, in launching, broke down the ways and lay there for some days, lopped over ignominiously to one side before she was finally set afloat! Our worthy tax-collector at the present date, Capt. Henry W. Davis, sailed as first mate in the Lexington on her first voyage, and returned home in command of her in 1840, after the death of Capt. Alexander Pollard. The Joseph Starbuck, one of the best and most costly ships ever fitted at this port, was built and launched in 1838, and it is worthy of note that after making only one voyage she was totally lost on the shores of our own island in 1842. She was the last ship built at Brant Point, though the reconstruction and enlargement of the Ganges in 1840 might almost be called building a new ship upon an old keel. For some years after that time, the railway still continued to find business, but it of course languished with the gradual decline, and the jobs were small ones, gradually growing fewer and farther between. Mr. Elisha Smith, having purchased a controlling interest there, did the last work of any magnitude, rebuilding the ship Planter, and even comparatively young men and women can remember the night when that ship was totally destroyed by fire in 1859. We believe

that the last whaler on the ways, probably the last vessel of any considerable size, was the bark R. L. Barstow, in 1862, and the business since that date is scarcely worthy of mention. The facts given may be new to young readers, and will revive past memories in older ones, but we have been gradually educated in a new faith, and can rejoice together at any signs of renewed activity giving promise of employment, growth, improvement and increase in the value of property at home.

Written for the Inquirer and Mirror.

## REMINISCENCES.

Whalers---Oil and Candle Works---Mechanical Trades.

NUMBER TWO.

During the year 1830 twenty-one whalers sailed from this port, the greater part of them for the Pacific Ocean, sperm whaling, and the rest for the "Brazil Banks." Only six of the whole number were absent over three years, and the quantity of oil brought in by them amounted to 29,049 barrels of sperm, and 12,659 barrels of whale. The amount of bone brought home in those days was hardly made any account of, as it possessed but little value, while to-day it is the most valuable part of a right whaler's cargo. The importation of so large a quantity of oil, the greater part of which was manufactured here, kept the oil and candle factories in full blast, and scores of men were employed in them: oftentimes two gangs, running night and day. These candle factories were scattered all over town, most of the principal ship owners having their own, while many others were carried on by those who purchased crude oil, and then manufactured it for the various markets abroad. Among the ones which I best remember, were those of Aaron Mitchell, Matthew Crosby, Levi Starbuck, Gideon Folger, Joseph Starbuck, P. H. Folger, Thomas Macy, Hadwen & Barney, Jared Coffin, Prince & Benjamin Gardner and Paul Macy. Not only was business driving in the manufacture of oils, but in every mechanical business connected with the fitting out of whaleships. Coopers' shops were having full swing all over town, most of their owners at that day having them near their dwelling houses, they not being, as in latter years, all crowded near the wharves. They were as far north as North shore hill, and west to Aaron Folger's, which was, I believe, the most western cooper's shop. The merry rattle of the hammer and driver could be heard in any part of the town, from early morning until late in the evening, and loads of staves, heading and hoop iron were constantly passing from the wharves to the shops, and new casks being taken to the vessels. How many of these shops were in active operation at that time it is now impossible to tell, or the number of hands that were employed in them; but it would certainly surprise us at this time could we know their numbers.

The building of boats was another great branch of industry connected with the whaling business, as six or eight were carried away by every ship that sailed. The shops for the building of these boats were generally near the water, although some of them were far removed from it, as were those of Charles Folger, and George & Reuben Coffin at the "Big Shop," at both of which places great numbers of very excellent boats were built, and carted to the wharves.

The making of harpoons, lances, spades, knives and the thousand-and-one articles taken away on our whalers, kept a large force of blacksmiths always at work. Their shops were as a general thing strung along the streets just at the head of the wharves, and were mostly low, dingy-looking buildings, but were lighted up within by the bright fires from the forges, showing hanging on racks along their sides rows of implements of all kinds, for the capture and cutting up of leviathan.

The manufacture of cordage was also carried on to a great extent, no less than eight ropewalks being in operation. About all the cordage used by our whalers and coasting vessels was then manufactured on the island, employing about twenty-five men to each ropewalk, making all kinds of rope, from a single yarn to a cable, for most of our ships used cables of hemp, those of chain being then quite rare. I remember well seeing the string of carts loaded with the huge coils of these unwieldy monsters, going down Main street from the walks of Matthew Myrick, Isaac Myrick, and Albert Gardner, west of the town, conveying them to the ships at our wharves. One cart would be loaded to its full capacity, then the cable was passed to the next team, and so on until the whole was loaded, taking, as near I can remember, as many as five carts, to convey one. The walks of Matthew Myrick, Isaac Myrick, Charles Hussey and Valentine Bunker stood just west of the Prospect Hill cemetery; that of Albert Gardner, at the head of Main street, on what is now the Lowell lot; that of Henry Riddell, opposite the Springfield House, on North Water street, on the land now owned by Elijah H. Alley; that of Gardner Coffin, east of the Cliff bathing houses, and the Carey walk, lastly owned by Joseph James, where the great fire of 1838 originated, east of Union, and south of Coffin streets. In addition to these there were two twine factories, one in Egypt and the other on the South beach. With the exception of a small piece of the Isaac Myrick walk, used as a barn, I do not know of a vestige of either of them left. Russia hemp was then the only article used in the manufacture of cables and rigging of all kinds, the Manila hemp not coming into use until some years later. The manufacture of sails, the making of spars, blocks, and other articles for our shipping, were other branches of industry employing a large number of men. All other branches of mechanical labor flourished on the island, and scores of carpenters, painters, wheelwrights, candle-box makers, bakers, tailors, &c., had full employment. There was work for every man then who wanted work, and when the old South bell rung out the hour of noon, Main street, as well as the other streets leading up from the wharves, were filled with an army of workingmen going up for their dinners, presenting a sight, the like of which I fear we shall never look upon again.

From this hasty and imperfect sketch, some idea may be formed of the vast amount of mechanical business there was carried on at that time, the great amount of capital invested, and the host of men and boys employed in the manufacture of some of the leading articles used on board our fleet of whalers and coasting vessels sailing from Nantucket half a century ago.

1830.



When Ships Were Built and  
Launched at Brant Point.



NANTUCKET AS IT APPEARED IN 1836.

The youths of today, who know Brant Point and Beachside only as a section dotted with costly summer homes and cottages, can scarcely realize that eighty years ago quite a spirited business was carried on there in the way of repairing old ships, and even now and then building new ones. The marine railway was indeed seldom unoccupied for any length of time, and it was no unusual occurrence for vessels to be waiting for each other, one off the ways and another on.

Besides the buildings for purposes connected with the business, there were in the near vicinity several dwelling houses tenanted usually by families of men who worked there; and a wharf or pier extending into the harbor at the east of the settlement where the water deepened quickly, affording facilities for any good-sized coasting vessels to load or discharge cargo. At times large gangs of workmen were employed on the Point; and the place presented an appearance of active industry, bustle and thrift, which now seems strange enough to imagine.

Of course it was necessary to import all the material, all kinds of wood and metal, for building a ship here, but even this did not deter our enterprising men, who had a strong feeling of local pride and seemed determined to build, and indeed to do almost everything else even in the face of the greatest difficulties. We cannot tell how many small vessels have been built here at various times, but the first ship built there was the *Rose*, which was launched in November, 1802, and sailed on her first China voyage in 1803. This ship made several voyages, but was finally captured by a British cruiser during the war and carried as a prize into Mauritius.

The ship *Charles Carroll* was launched here in 1832; the *Lexington* and *Nantucket*, in 1836, and the *Joseph Starbuck* in 1838. All these were fine, well-built ships, and did excellent service in the whaling times. It is a little remarkable that the *Joseph Starbuck*, after making a successful voyage was, when starting on a second, wrecked upon our own shores, and finished her career a few miles from the spot where she was built and launched. This happened in November, 1842. The *Charles Carroll* was sold in California soon after the gold fever broke out; the *Lexington* continued in the business until 1862, when she was lost at Strong's Island in the Pacific Ocean; and the *Nantucket* was shipwrecked upon the island of *Naushon*, while coming from a voyage in 1859.

In 1840 the old ship *Ganges* was so completely rebuilt at Brant Point yard, that she was virtually a new ship, very little of the old wood being left. Her keel was sawed in two and lengthened several feet, making her a larger vessel than before. But the last job of any magnitude on the railway was the rebuilding of the *Planter*, which ship was never again launched, having been entirely destroyed by fire while she lay on the stocks, in October, 1859. But the railway was still in operation on a smaller scale several years afterward.

Read by the late Capt. Oliver G. Fosdick at a Reunion of the "Sons and Daughters" a number of years ago.

During the year 1838 the new ship *Joseph Starbuck* was to be launched at 12 o'clock noon, from the ways on

Brant Point. The occasion was made a gala day; the children were given a half holiday from school; and long before time of launching, it seemed as though the entire population of the island was hurrying toward the water front, to be on hand to witness the inspiring spectacle of a noble ship sliding into the water for the first time. Young James F. Chase was among those who were on hand bright and early.

This son of our ocean isle was the cynosure of all eyes; for it was known that he was going with Captain Sanford Wilber in the new ship, and surely that was enough to make a hero of him. Old *Joseph Starbuck* was the owner of the craft, and oh, how his kind and strongly-marked face lighted up with a smile as, with words of encouragement, he watched the Chase boy vie with others in bringing sail cloth and coils of rope to make comfortable seats for their mothers and sisters, who with others, were standing on Old North wharf watching the proceedings!

What a happy time it was. All seemed to take a personal interest and delight in the launching. Among that large crowd almost everyone had a relative, who in all likelihood, would in time go on the ship or be connected in some manner with her future welfare. What a scene it was. There were old weather-beaten salts, who had made their last voyage with Captain Wilber, and noticeable among them was the veteran Robert Ratliff, the old boss rigger, who had secured a point of vantage on top of one of the long spiles, and who shouted to the populace, "Be all ready to give her

three cheers when she strikes the water's edge!"

Some of the boys had climbed to the tops of the dismantled hulks that were tied up along the wharves, while others had perched themselves on the point of the old-fashioned wooden davits, and with the rest were eagerly awaiting the striking of the bell in the old south tower, which, at intervals, announced to the assemblage the time of day.

As the appointed hour drew near, the sound of the caulker's mallet ceased; the ring of the blacksmith's anvil was silent; the coopers' hammers were laid away on the top of the oil casks upon which the coopers themselves climbed. The long, old-fashioned oil trucks were hauled near the capstan of the wharves and were utilized as a sort of settee, and the post of honor—the horse's back—was gladly made available by the younger sons of the island.

The weather was perfect. A gentle southwest wind ruffled slightly the surface of the water in the harbor and caused the ensigns and ship-owners' flags, which were flying from the mast-heads of the vessels around the docks, to flutter in the breeze. On board the ship had been rigged a sort of jury-mast over the vessel's taffrail, and attached to it were the national colors, while up forward on the knight-heads were two poles. On one of these poles was the union jack, and on the other was displayed the private signal of the owners—a blue-white-and-blue, vertical striped flag, which today floats over a New York ship, and denotes a *Starbuck* owner. Here and there, over the deck, were



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stretched canvas awnings, under which a favored few, in company with Captain Wilber and the owners of the ship, were seated eagerly watching and awaiting the actions of the ship's carpenters. These were busily at work on the deck attending to the numerous details of the task at hand.

Attention must be paid to the numerous guy ropes which were stretched to the projecting spiles of her wooden cradle, and like a fond mother's caress to her child, the men would bestow a parting touch to each rope as they left it. The clanking of the anchor chains as they were arranged in layers around the windlass, in readiness for the virgin plunge into the waters of the harbor, added to the general confusion.

Soon, however, all was ready, and Captain Wilber, accompanied by his youngest son, proceeded to the bow of the ship, and the captain, uncovering his head, announced to the spectators his son would christen the ship, "The Joseph Starbuck, of Nantucket."

Twelve o'clock now rang out from the belfry. The chocks and cleats were at once knocked away from the ship. At the suggestion of the mate, Mr. Henry Plaskett, a rush aft was made by her passengers, which added an impetus to her motion, and ere the clock had ceased striking, the good ship slid from the ways. As her stern shot into the water, it sent a great wave across to the neighboring wharves and caused the small craft in the harbor to rock to and fro like cradles.

At the same time a mighty shout was sent up by the multitude. All around a host of marine birds encircled the vessel, as though wondering what strange creature it could be, and one, more daring than the rest, alighted on the tip of the bow-sprit, fluttered for a moment, and flew away.

"Oh, how beautiful," exclaimed the Chase boy's sisters. "She floats like a swan."

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The launching was quickly and safely over. Ropes were passed from the ship to the wharf, and she was hauled under the shears at Commercial wharf, preparatory to shipping the masts. Tears came into Mrs. Chase's eyes as she looked from the ship to her boy. "Don't feel bad," was his comforting assurance. "She is a splendid ship, and we are going to have a good voyage, and we will have lots of money when we come home."

Old Captain Wilber had been a life-long friend of Mrs. Chase and of her husband. One day the captain called at the Chase cottage and imparted news to Mrs. Chase which at first tore her heart. A ship had been built for him, he said. He had decided to make one more voyage, and if she would consent, he would take her son to sea with him.

The prospect thus opened before her, the long years of separation from her beloved boy, was a sorrowful one indeed, but finally she gave her consent. Any Nantucket mother would have done the same in those days.

### When Ships Were Built And Launched on Brant Point.

The youths of today, who know Brant Point and Beachside only as a section dotted with costly summer homes and cottages, can scarcely realize that one hundred years ago quite a spirited business was carried on there in the way of repairing old ships, and even now and then building new ones. The marine railway was indeed seldom unoccupied for any length of time, and it was no unusual occurrence for vessels to be waiting for each other, one off the ways and another on.

Besides the buildings for purposes connected with the business, there were in the near vicinity several dwelling houses tenanted usually by families of men who worked there; and a wharf or pier extending into the harbor at the east of the settlement where the water deepened quickly, affording facilities for any good-sized coasting vessels to load or discharge cargo. At times large gangs of workmen were employed on the Point; and the place presented an appearance of active industry, bustle and thrift, which now seems strange enough to imagine.

Of course, it was necessary to import all the material, all kinds of wood and metal, for building a ship here, but even this did not deter our enterprising men, who had a strong feeling of local pride and seemed determined to build, and indeed to do almost everything else even in the face of the greatest difficulties. We cannot tell how many small vessels have been built here at various times, but the first ship built there was the Rose, which was launched in November, 1802, and sailed on her first China voyage in 1803. This ship made several voyages, but was finally captured by a British cruiser during the war and carried as a prize into Mauritius.

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What a happy time it was. All seemed to take a personal interest and delight in the launching. Among that large crowd almost everyone had a relative who, in all likelihood, would in time go on the ship or be connected in some manner with her future welfare. What a scene it was. There were old weather-beaten salts, who had made their last voyage with Captain Wilber, and noticeable among them was the veteran Robert Ratliff, the old boss rigger, who had secured a point of vantage on top of one of the long spiles, and who shouted to the populace, "Be all ready to give her three cheers when she strikes the water's edge!"

Some of the boys had climbed to the tops of the dismantled hulks that were tied up along the wharves, while others had perched themselves on the point of the old-fashioned wooden davits, and with the rest were eagerly awaiting the striking of the bell in the old south tower, which, at intervals, announced to the assemblage the time of day.

As the appointed hour drew near, the sound of the caulker's mallet ceased; the ring of the blacksmith's anvil was silent; the coopers' hammers were laid away on the top of the oil casks upon which the coopers themselves climbed. The long, old-fashioned trucks were hauled near the capstan of the wharves and were utilized as a sort of settee, and the post of honor—the horse's back—was gladly made available by the younger sons of the island.

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Dec. 13, 1911

Dec. 15, 1917



When Nantucket Built Ships  
Brant Point.



Brant Point and Beachside before any summer cottages were erected there—when the lighthouse was the lone sentinel on "the point." The view shows the changes on and in the vicinity of Steamboat wharf since this picture was taken sixty years ago.

The youths of today, who know Brant Point and Beachside only as a section dotted with costly summer homes and cottages, can scarcely realize that a century ago quite a spirited business was carried on there in the way of repairing old ships, and even now and then building new ones. The marine railway was located approximately where the estate known as "Driftwood" is now located. It was seldom unoccupied for any length of time, and it was no unusual occurrence for vessels to be waiting for each other, one off the ways and another on.

Besides the buildings, for purposes connected with the business, there were in the near vicinity several dwelling houses tenanted usually by families of men who worked there; and a wharf or pier extending into the harbor at the east of the settlement where the water deepened quickly, affording facilities for any good-sized coasting vessel to load or discharge cargo. At times large gangs of workmen were employed on the Point; and the place presented an appearance of active industry, bustle and thrift, which now seems strange to visualize.

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*As Related by the Late Capt.  
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Some of the boys had climbed to the tops of the dismantled hulks that were tied up along the wharves, while others had perched themselves on the point of the old-fashioned wooden davits, and with the rest were eagerly awaiting the striking of the bell in the old south tower, which, at intervals, announced to the assemblage the time of day.

As the appointed hour drew near, the sound of the caulker's mallet ceased; the ring of the blacksmith's anvil was silent; the coopers' hammers were laid away on the top of the oil casks upon which the coopers themselves climbed. The long, old-fashioned oil trucks were hauled near the caplogs of the wharves and were utilized as a sort of settee and the post of honor—the horse's back—was gladly made available by the younger sons of the island.

The weather was perfect. A gentle southwest wind ruffled slightly the surface of the water in the harbor and caused the ensigns from the mast-heads of the vessels around the docks to flutter in the breeze. On board the ship had been rigged a sort of jury-mast over the vessel's taffrail, and attached to it were the national colors, while up forward on the knight-heads were two poles. On one of these poles was the union jack, and on the other was displayed the private signal of the owners—a blue-white-and-blue, vertical striped flag which today floats over a New York ship, and denotes a Starbuck owner. Here and there, over the deck, were stretched canvas awnings, under which a favored few, in company with Capt. Wilber and the owners of the ship, were seated eagerly watching and awaiting the actions of the ship's carpenters. These were busily at work on the deck attending to the numerous details of the task at hand.

Attention must be paid to the numerous guy ropes which were stretched to the projecting spiles of her wooden cradle, and like a fond mother's caress to her child, the men would bestow a parting touch to each rope as they left it. The clanking of the anchor chains as they were arranged in layers around the windlass, in readiness for the virgin plunge into the waters of the harbor added to the general confusion.

Soon, however, all was ready, and Capt. Wilber, accompanied by his youngest son, proceeded to the bow of the ship, and the captain, uncovering his head announced to the spectators his son would christen the ship, "The Joseph Starbuck, of Nantucket."

Twelve o'clock now rang out from the belfry. The chocks and cleats were at once knocked away from the ship. At the suggestion of the mate, Henry Plaskett, a rush aft was made by her passengers which added impetus to her motion, and ere the clock had ceased striking, the good ship slid from the ways. As her stern shot into the water, it sent a great wave across to the neighboring wharves and caused the small craft in the harbor to rock to and fro like cradles.



At the same time a mighty shout was sent up by the multitude. All around a host of marine birds encircled the vessel, as though wondering what strange creature it could be, and one more daring than the rest, alighted on the tip of the bow-sprit, fluttered for a moment, and flew away. "Oh, how beautiful," exclaimed the Chase boy's sisters, "She floats like a swan."

Orders came thick and fast from Capt. Wilber: "Run out a rope through the midship chock for a breast line, and have a line ready to throw on the wharf!" he shouted. And then the old rigger's voice could be heard, "Give her three cheers, boys!" And the salutation was given with a will.

The launching was quickly and safely over. Ropes were passed from the ship to the wharf, and she was hauled under the shears at Commercial wharf, preparatory to shipping the masts. Tears came into Mrs. Chase's eyes as she looked from the ship to her boy. "Don't feel bad," was his comforting assurance, "She is a splendid ship, and we are going to have a good voyage, and we will have lots of money when we come home."

Old Captain Wilber had been a life-long friend of Mrs. Chase and of her husband. One day the captain called at the Chase cottage and imparted news to Mrs. Chase which at first tore her heart. A ship had been built for him, he said. He had decided to make one more voyage, and if she would consent, he would take her son to sea with him.

The prospect thus opened before her, the long years of separation from her beloved boy, was a sorrowful one indeed, but finally she gave her consent. Any Nantucket mother would have done the same in those days. Joyful indeed was Mrs. Chase when a boy came rushing to her, as was the custom then, to tell her the glad tidings of the ship's return after a short, and one of the most prosperous voyages ever made from Nantucket, and never was the fixed compensation of one dollar given more cheerfully.

AUGUST 18, 1934

The brick oil sheds on Washington street collapsed last Monday, the whole structure falling in. The work of taking them down had just commenced. Fortunately no one was injured.

Apr. 7, 1883

## Inquirer and Mirror.

SATURDAY, MAY 22, 1880.

Entered at the Post Office, Nantucket, as second-class matter.

### Ship Building on Brant Point.

The present generation of Nantucketers are prone to talk more about the promised railroad that is yet to be built, than about the old marine railway at Brant Point, but occasionally we hear the subject discussed, questions being asked by young people about the building of ships here, and an appeal to some elderly person to tell whatever he may happen to remember concerning the subject.

The youths of to-day, who look upon the bare, barren waste of beach sand between North Beach street and Brant Point light-house, can scarcely realize that forty years ago quite a spirited business was carried on there in the way of repairing old ships, and even now and then building new ones. The marine railway was indeed seldom unoccupied for any length of time, and it was no unusual occurrence within our own memory, for vessels to be waiting for each other, one off the ways and another on. Besides the buildings for purposes connected with the business, there were in the near vicinity several dwelling houses tenanted usually by families of men who worked there; and a wharf or pier extending into the harbor at the east of the settlement where the water deepened quickly, affording facilities for any good-sized coasting vessels to load or discharge cargo. At times large gangs of workmen were employed on the Point, and the place presented an appearance of active industry, bustle and thrift, which now seems strange enough to recall.

Of course it was necessary to import all the material, all kinds of wood and metal, for building a ship here, but even this did not deter our enterprising men, who had a strong feeling of local pride and seemed determined to build, and indeed to do almost everything else even in the face of the greatest difficulties. We cannot tell how many small vessels have been built here at various times, but those are yet living who can remember when the ship *Rose* was built and launched in November, 1802, and sailed on her first China voyage in 1803. This ship made several voyages, but was finally captured by a British cruiser during the war and carried as a prize into Mauritius.

We include in our own personal reminiscences the building of four ships and two large schooners. The ship *Charles Carroll* was launched here in 1832; the *Lexington* and *Nantucket*, both under construction at the same time, in 1836, and the *Joseph Starbuck* in 1838. All these were fine, well-built ships, and did excellent service in the whaling times. It is a little remarkable that the *Joseph Starbuck*, after making a successful voyage was, when starting on a second, wrecked upon our own shores, and finished her career a few miles from the spot where she was built and launched. This happened in 1842. The *Charles Carroll* was sold in California soon after the gold fever broke out; the *Lexington* continued in the business until 1862, when she was lost at Strong's Island in the Pacific Ocean; and the *Nantucket* was shipwrecked upon the island of Naushon, while coming from a voyage in 1859.

In 1840 the old ship *Ganges* was so completely rebuilt at Brant Point yard, that she was virtually a new ship, very little of the old wood being left. Her keel was sawed in two and lengthened several feet, making her a larger vessel than before. But the last job of any magnitude on the railway was the rebuilding of the *Planter*, which ship was never again launched, having been entirely destroyed by fire while she lay on the stocks, in October, 1859. But the railway was still in operation on a smaller scale several years afterward.

Our reminiscences are somewhat incomplete, and we have been obliged to rely almost entirely upon our own memory for the facts given. But some of our elderly readers may furnish more in addition, which will be of great interest to those curious in such matters.

May 22, 1880

### The Winter Club Hears Talk On Melville and Moby-Dick.

On Tuesday evening the Winter Club met at The Woodbox, Fair street, with the host being Frederick P. Hill. The speaker of the evening was Edouard Stackpole, and his topic was: "Melville, Moby-Dick and Nantucket." Presiding at the meeting was Roy E. Sanguinetti, vice-president of the Club.

Launching his talk with a summary of Melville's life, the speaker went into a description of this outstanding American writer's seafaring career. He re-created the voyage of the Fairhaven whaleship *Acushnet* in which Melville sailed on Jan. 2, 1841, and from which craft he deserted at Nukahiva in July, 1842. He then traced Melville's subsequent experiences in the Australian whaler *Lucy Ann*—sailing to Tahiti from the Marquesas; hence his embarking on board the Nantucket whaleship *Charles & Henry* and his arrival at the Hawaiian Islands in May, 1843. Melville returned to America, arriving in Boston on the frigate *United States* in 1844.

The speaker stressed Melville's evident admiration for Nantucket which is so eloquently reflected throughout the pages of "Moby-Dick." He told of the author's use of two of the great Nantucket maritime dramas—the loss of the ship *Essex* and the mutiny on the ship *Globe*.

In conclusion, the speaker gave a few excerpts from "Moby-Dick," especially those passages dealing with Nantucket. An account of Melville's only known visit to the island was given, and the talk was brought to a conclusion with an imagined account of the possible meeting of Melville and a tragic son of Nantucket.

Refreshments in the unique dining room of The Woodbox brought a close to an "evening with Melville."

March 3, 1951

### The Old Marine Railway.

A number of house-lots have recently been purchased as sites for summer cottages within the limits of the very piece of land on Brant Point which was for many years occupied as a marine railway and ship-yard. Our younger readers are accustomed to think of Brant Point as a place well enough adapted for a Government beacon, and of the faithful light-keeper as a kind of enforced hermit, living within rather inconvenient reach of civilization, but in a state of quiet and solitude, rarely broken save by some passing steamer or coasting craft. Only such of us as have reached and passed middle age can realize the changes and contrasts of half a century, and remember how the sound of axe and sledge used to ring out in that locality, which after since lying neglected and uncared for is now to be made useful and valuable for purposes of elegant leisure.

This tract of land containing little more than three acres, with a harbor front of four hundred feet on the south line was set off by the proprietors in 1830 to Philip H. Folger, and being by him transferred in shares to several others, his associates, the necessary buildings, launch-ways and machinery were soon put in place, and the organization known as the Nantucket Marine Railway Company found no reason in those stirring days to complain of dull times or lack of business. Besides the ships sailing and returning on long Pacific voyages, our fleet of coasting vessels was then a large one, for sailing craft did the work which would now-a-days be done by steamers and rail-roads in the way of transportation. There were always some vessels waiting repairs, and for many years the ways at Brant Point were seldom unoccupied. But this was not all, for the spirit of enterprise was rife at that period, and several new ships and other smaller vessels were built in the Brant Point ship-yard, the material for that purpose being brought to the island in vessels, and a pier or wharf built outward into the harbor for convenience of loading and discharging. The ship *Charles Carroll* was launched from this yard in 1832, and the boyish enthusiasm of that hour is still fresh in our memory. In 1836 two fine ships, the *Nantucket* and the *Lexington* were growing up at the same time, side by side, and a large force of workmen were employed upon them, for in those years many ship carpenters from the Cape and elsewhere moved with their families to our island and became citizens. How interested we boys of that date were in the completion of these two great ships! How knowingly we compared and discussed their models, and the fine points of each, and what a disappointment when the *Nantucket*, in launching, broke down the ways and lay there for some days, lopped over ignominiously to one side before she was finally set afloat! Our worthy tax-collector at the present date, Capt. Henry W. Davis, sailed as first mate in the *Lexington* on her first voyage, and returned home in command of her in 1840, after the death of Capt. Alexander Pollard. The *Joseph Starbuck*, one of the best and most costly ships ever fitted at this port, was built and launched in 1838, and it is worthy of note that after making only one voyage she was totally lost on the shores of our own island in 1842. She was the last ship built at Brant Point, though the reconstruction and enlargement of the *Ganges* in 1840 might almost be called building a new ship upon an old keel. For some years after that time, the railway still continued to find business, but it of course languished with the gradual decline, and the jobs were smaller ones, gradually growing fewer and farther between. Mr. Elisha Smith, having purchased a controlling interest there, did the last work of any magnitude, rebuilding the ship *Planter*, and even comparatively young men and women can remember the night when that ship was totally destroyed by fire in 1859. We believe that the last whaler on the ways, probably the last vessel of any considerable size, was the bark *R. L. Barstow*, in 1862, and the business since that date is scarcely worthy of mention. The facts given may be new to young readers, and will revive past memories in older ones, but we have been gradually educated in a new faith, and can rejoice together at any signs of renewed activity giving promise of employment, growth, improvement and increase in the value of property at home.

June 9, 1883



## Brandt Point—Ropewalks—Whaling Captains.

By FRED ELIJAH COFFIN.

Brandt Point in former years—say, from or before 1845 to 1865 and after—presented a totally different appearance from its present home-like and comfortably inviting aspect. Then, it was a shipyard, and wilderness of sand and chips and all sorts of construction rubbish around the two railways on the harbor side whereon usually rested some ship or coastwise schooner or sloop under construction or repairs. It was then a locality devoted entirely to business, and the ship carpenter was the dominating factor. There was no style about the locality.

The small boy wandering about there during school vacation, was fortunate if he did not get a splinter in his bare feet while wading through the deep hot sand. By crossing to the bay side of the Point he could swim in the purest and most refreshing sea-tank that the world affords. And then occasionally he was allowed the high privilege of being launched on some completed vessel. Rare, healthful, vacation days those, when the Nantucket boy untrammelled by the perplexities of "Reading, Riting, and Rithmetic" could wander about surrounded by safe environments, under the brightest of summer skies, the purest air from any quadrant, and facilities for bathing which would gratify a sea nymph of Greece.

As already intimated, the limnings now presented to the camera make a picture totally different from any that would have been thought of in those years, for in no locality has the evolution of Nantucket been better demonstrated.

### ROPEWALKS.

In my boyhood there were three or more ropewalks; one located on the south side of the road just westward of the Quaker Burying-ground; another long ago was located westward of the Mill Hills; and one near the approaches to Brandt Point. The first mentioned continued in existence and use the latest of all, down to about 1852. The old records say that in the year 1822 there were nine. "A traveller who visited the island in 1810 speaks of its windmills, ropewalks, and two steeples\* as prominent objects in the landscape." (Bliss).

\* The steeple of the Congregational church was afterwards removed.

These buildings were very long and narrow, and only about fifteen feet to the ridgepole. To the small boy who chanced occasionally to look in upon the few workers, the interior had a weird appearance, as the distant workman, with a coil of small rope about him, was slowly and silently walking up towards the spindles, which were worked by simple and primitive wheel power, and "laying up" the warp as he proceeded. The "power" at the wheel-work was a man or strong lad working at the crank. Among all these buildings there was only one which used steam power. To look down the long narrow aisle of the ropewalk was like looking through the object glass of a telescope.

Finally, with the decline of shipping, the ropewalks lapsed into silent decay, and their accustomed appearance for years as of a boundary line on the horizon stretching out like an emasculated Chinese wall, was missed—by their destruction.

These buildings had a charm for me when in use, on account of their fragrant and wholesome tarry odor. No one working there could suffer from tuberculosis unless the disease was already confirmed on him; and all working there for any considerable period must have been immune from the dread disease which in former years, before its character was understood, had affected so many.

But the harpoon lines which were made here, what of them? They were as strong and elastic and tough as the sinews of the whalers who used them. They were made of good Manila fibre—for Manila, and the coast of Japan, were familiar to our Pacific Ocean whalers many years before the brief unpleasantness with Spain. Lines which could stand the strain of a whale's "sleigh ride," or the brawn-proof test of towing a dead whale to the ship at the windward could best be made by those who well understood their intended use.

And the great cables were of the same material. The value of a good line is here told, although somewhat amusingly, considering it was of one known to be valiant in arms:

"Somewhere about 1824 Admiral Sir Isaac Coffin was in Philadelphia at the residence of his kinswoman Anna (Folger) Coffin, widow of Thomas Coffin. To the company gathered to meet him he told that being in command of a ship or fleet in the Pacific an American whaler was spoken. The Admiral was curious to see the taking of a whale, and accordingly went on board the American vessel. Soon a whale was sighted, the boats were lowered and the Admiral seated himself with the crew in one of them, the harpoon was thrown and then came the rush of the boat through the water which was walled on each side.

'Cut the rope!' cried the Admiral. 'No, no,' yelled the boatsteerer, 'you are not in command of this craft.'

So Sir Isaac had to sum up what nerve he could and await his fate. He closed his story by saying that he would infinitely rather have been at close quarters with a French seventy-four." (Hinchman, "Early Settlers of Nantucket.")

Incomplete  
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## Shipping and Throngs of Workers.

By FRED ELIJAH COFFIN.

There is a decided difference between faith and imagination. Faith is the more difficult to exercise. Imagination requires little or no base for its support; it may bound away in useful or harmful flights, with no more reality than the mirage of the desert. What I have to mention seems to require genuine faith on the part of those who know the town only in its later history. Intellectual faith may be direct, in reference to the future, or retro-active and have regard to the past. It is the latter which concerns us now.

Who, whether native-born or stranger, passing and repassing the quiet cleanly streets of the town, would believe that in the earlier whaling days its streets in the rush hours of the day—morning, noon, and business close—were crowded with mechanics, workers and business men eager to commence the day's concerns, eager at noon for their home-cooked dinner and return, and contentedly seeking their rest at the day's close? Yet such was constantly the case in the early boyhood of the writer. The resident population then was about ten thousand. Ships deeply set in the water with their valuable cargoes, were arriving often enough to give a perpetual motion to all interests and labors; and other earlier arrivals were busily refitting for another voyage. Those were cheerful days, there was "music in the air"—the hum of energetic and satisfying business.

There were no loafers, and only the aged and incapacitated had abundance of time, and they were regarded with respectful consideration. The ship, then, was the driving wheel of the whole industry; and where in each incoming ship was contained the result of the industries of three or four years, and the outgoing ships were preparing for the same period of years—the source and inspiration of this energy was apparent.

Stevedores, truckmen, coopers, sail-makers, blacksmiths, ship-carpenters, bakers of hard tack—all the workers united in one great stream of men, branching off in different directions when the mellow tones of the noon bell rang out; and anxious owners and business men drove their teams toward home with the one intent of utilizing every moment of time. If any one in these days wishes to know something of what this was like, let him try to walk on Broadway, New York, from Fulton street to Bowling Green, from 12.30 to 2 p. m., but he must not compare a town of a few thousands with a city of five millions.

This stream of workers was the daily experience of those times. The world changes, and the closing of old channels of opulence is not a new thing. Some ancient routes of commerce in the Orient, where for long periods wealth-laden caravans have traversed, are now closed. No argosies, as of old, now pour into the coffers of sumptuous Venice their constant tributes of wealth. The changes of evolution are everywhere apparent on the earth—why should they not be here? Here surely have they closed

"A piece of work  
So bravely done, so rich."

An effective cause for depletion in the ranks of the workers was the "California Fever" of 1849, as it was called. As the work of the ship-

ping declined, the lure of the golden sand took a positive hold on the active young and middle-aged men, large numbers of whom, during two or three years, started off to meet conditions which had thoroughly aroused their ambition. Only a small percentage of these ever returned to the island. These conditions are aptly described by one who could well interpret what he could have known little of by personal experience:

"The town was a hive of industry. Its streets were busy market places; the paving-stones and the sand were rutted and stained by a constant travel of trucks loaded with hogsheads of oil and other merchandise just arrived or just going away. Its five wharves were lined with whaling ships getting ready to sail, and with merchant vessels loading or discharging cargoes. All day long, coopers, sparmakers, riggers, boat-builders and sail-makers were at work; ironsmiths were forging harpoons, lances and knives; cordage-factories were turning out every kind of standing and running rigging, bolt-rope, wormline, marline, spun-yarn, whale-lines, and any other article in their line, of a good quality and on favorable terms, as the announcements stated. Only when the Old South bell rang the hour of noon, and the streets were thronged with mechanics going home to dinner was there a lull in the noises of labor."

"Quaint Nantucket," W. R. Bliss, 1896.

It was during this period of wholesome activity when on a hot summer day a whaleship arrived at the bar with a full cargo, and therefore drawing too much water to cross. The "camels," which were really a large port-and-starboard barge in two sections, box-shaped and empty, of large dimensions and therefore very buoyant, wriggled out to the ship under their own feeble steam-power, supported and raised the ship and cargo so as to reduce the draught by several inches, and with the old steamer "Telegraph" to tow them proceeded slowly over the bar into the harbor. A few of us boys had been allowed to go out on the steamer on this tow. Captain Barker was in charge.

The ship's sails had been snugly furled, for the last time on this voyage; but, as usual, the ship was oily and grimy throughout. After proceeding a little with the tow, when off the Cliff, it was perceived that a spark from the steamers funnel had lodged in one of the topsails, and the smoke indicated surely that only a brief interval would elapse before bursting into flame. The gravity of that fact under the circumstances was too evident for any discussion; the only thing to consider was the squelching of the fire at once. It had been reported to Captain Barker and he was astern instantly. A sailor had already run up the shrouds to the place but did not quite know what to do first. Captain Barker shouted to him: "Put your cap over it and smother it! Put your cap over it and smother it!"

The sailor quickly had his cap over the smoke, pulled his jacket all around and leaned over it—thus quickly smothering it. Other sailors by this time were there, each with a bucket of water, but the smothering had done the business and saved the ship. Had that blaze gained a little headway on



those oily surroundings on that hot day no appliances or power at hand could have stopped it, and the rich cargo, the accrued result of four years of active work, would quickly have been turned into uncommercial smoke. The quick way in which it was smothered out was a relief to all; and here-in lies a valuable lesson of experience. Anything in our lives or our surroundings which is liable to burst out into a flame of malicious or injurious activity can be best treated by smothering.

These days of glorious and profitable activity which were participated in mostly by our own townspeople, aided by only a few Kanakas and other helpers, were destined to cease. The final results are described also by Bliss in a few terse lines:

"At last the tide turned, and the prosperity of Nantucket began to depart. Its sounds of industry became fainter; its wharves fell into decay; its population decreased in numbers; its marine philosophers drifted away to the unknown sea; and when in the year 1869, the last whaling ship sailed from the harbor bar, silence dropped his mantle on the town."

[Note.—Mr. Coffin's next article will be in connection with "The Great Fire," which devastated Nantucket sixty-eight years ago—July 13, 1846.]

July 4, 1914

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The rope which was strong enough to make the Admiral's "sleigh-ride" possible was, without doubt, made in one of these rope-walks. The boatmen know that the whale will not circumnavigate the globe with them, for, big as he is, he is a red-blooded air breather, and must soon stop for breath; so they let him run, but keep on the alert for emergencies, and if it must be, the sharp knife was ready to cut the line and end all danger—but with the loss of the whale.

#### THE WHALING CAPTAINS.

The Nantucket whaling captains were a class of noble, large, well-built, bronzed, robust men, intelligent and having more than the average education of those times, cheerful and optimistic, resourceful for any emergency, but their labors and achievements were done for away from home—mostly in the Pacific Ocean. We have not been present when daring deeds have been done—and these are often in evidence on the high seas, even in peaceful pursuits, and when the long voyage was ended, many incidents and exploits of daring and courage were forgotten or seldom mentioned, being regarded as of little account. But we know of the risks attending the capture of the hugest animal of creation, and those reveal to us a knowledge of their heroism and achievements of a high order.

Their voices were deep, rich and musical, whether for low tones or full expression. What splendid basses for a large chorus! What genuine basso-profondos!

If musically inclined and instructed, how richly would they roll out their part in some of the numbers of Mendelssohn's "Elijah" such as number 20. "Thanks be to God:"—

"The stormy billows are high;  
Their fury is mighty, mighty their fury."

Or in Handel's "Messiah," especially the Hallelujah Chorus.

Or in that virile and grand piece, Greig's "Land Sighting." Any conductor would be satisfied in having one of them take the solo part—written for a baritone but often given to the strongest second base—beginning:

"Here the land is, this the strand is,  
Templed arches front the darkness."

Or finally, how correctly could they have rendered—"Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep!"

Once the writer was aboard one of the sound steamers on the western trip. The captain—one of the same quality but in a different line—was anxious to start away, but at Newport there was considerable freight that evening. He leaned over the gang way of the second deck and in a quiet, strong voice called out to the deck hands: "Lively there, boys, lively." None of them looked up to see where the voice came from; they all knew the voice and got at their work with redoubled activity. There was no faultfinding or querulousness in such a voice, it was strong and deep, and carried with it the power of command; and shortly the big steamer was headed out towards Point Judith—"P'int Judah" as the old coasters called it.

These strong, mellow voices are not common, especially in church choirs. In our church choirs how surely is it the case that there is lacking the full and sonorous bass; and consequently how often is the fact noticed that church choirs are not properly balanced.

In much of the music of our choirs there is little of the choral character, the only effective vocal utterance being that of the high-pitched soprano. Solo singing, of music for any one part, has its fitting place in church music; but a practical monopoly of soloism—either from indifferent tolerance, or lack of strength in the other parts—is not good choral form; and of all music for church and sacred purposes choral music is best. Large choirs are usually well balanced, but not always.

July 25, 1914

#### An Historic Picture.

Editor of The Inquirer and Mirror:

Transition from a wood carver's block to the easel and palette of an artist became easy to James Walter Folger, a great grandson of the late Hon. Walter Folger, astronomer and mathematician. His recent historical picture in oil colors attests his genius, and gives promise of future accomplishment to his credit.

Ship building on Brant point was the artist's theme, the home coming of "ships that pass in the night," loaded with sperm oil, coming down to Nantucket bar, rounding Brant point into the haven where they would be. While these incidents were transpiring, all so familiar to our older residents, our artist was not born; but later on, he had ever so studiously read in books, and in thumb-worn manuscripts, of this lucrative industry; he had become interested in the island's traditions, often spell-bound by graphic recitals of the exploits of our navigators—only a few of whom survive to recount their thrilling sea stories.

In a word, he had so thoroughly imbibed the spirit of these "toilers of the sea," that with no thought of failure to develop what lay hidden in his mental film, he confidently drew upon his imagination at the first dash of his brush. What a broad subject it was! "A View of Brant Point, and Entrance to Harbor of Nantucket, Mass., from 1820 to 1842," was its title.

At once the difficulties of his task, the ever so annoying criticisms of those who did not, or would not understand the inspiration that encouraged him, sank into insignificance. Every mark of his brush revealed to him, only, his completed picture, as to Powers, the sculptor, his beautiful "Greek Slave" was visible while he poised his chisel. Mr. Folger realized the permanent truth once uttered by Thoreau, of "Walden Woods:" "Imagination is the air of mind, in which it lives and breathes." The shaping influence of imagination was his invisible companion daily, as he worked alone in the attic chamber of his cozy home on Joy street.

Reading from left to right, the picture is descriptive as follows: The ship building on the stocks is the Joseph Starbuck, the last whaling-ship built in these ship-yards (1838). Next is shown a marine railway for smaller crafts to be repaired; a plank-pen; ship in cradle on large railway being calked, with a horse attached to the windlass. The style of lighthouse in vogue on Brant point in 1820 is next shown. The bark Peru, the first vessel to use the camels, is being towed in by steamer Telegraph, with a full cargo of 100 barrels of sperm oil (1842). [The first ship towed out in the camels was the Phebe in 1842.]

This picture represents the activity on and about Brant point during the palmy days of Nantucket, when whaling was at its height, with many ships hailing from this port, numerous oil works, coopers' shops, candle houses, rope-walks, etc.

I can vouch for the drawing of the bark Peru, for, while a little boy, my father took me to Brant point, long ago as 1842, time of the bark's arrival. At this late day I seem to inhale the sea breeze, and the slightest odor of tar and oakum from the ship's deck. I hear the rippling waves on the pebbly beach, the scream of a solitary sea gull, and I recollect my boyish pride when my father told me that my uncle, Joshua Coffin, was the successful captain of the Peru. Granddaughters of the late Captain Coffin, one of Nantucket's most intrepid whalers, now live in Auburn, N. Y., in whose homes the Inquirer and Mirror is numbered among favorite family papers. Of the building of the whale-ship Joseph Starbuck, many islanders can recall the date, and repeat with no little pride, Longfellow's lines:

"We know what master laid thy keel,  
What workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,  
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,  
In what a furnace, what a heat,  
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope."

To-day many of our citizens with me, can see back of this picture, another. Like a mirage the vision appears to us. From the glowing halo of a sacred remembrance, invisible to the outward eye, come, one by one, portraits of respected merchants and ship owners of Nantucket's halcyon days, faces of gentle women departed this life, the like of whom we shall never see again within our island borders.

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Arthur Elwell Jenks.

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Of course it was necessary to import all the material, all kinds of wood and metal, for building a ship here, but even this did not deter our enterprising men, who had a strong feeling of local pride and seemed determined to build, and indeed to do almost everything else even in the face of the greatest difficulties. We cannot tell how many small vessels have been built here at various times, but those are yet living who can remember when the ship *Rose* was built and launched in November, 1802, and sailed on her first China voyage in 1803. This ship made several voyages, but was finally captured by a British cruiser during the war and carried as a prize into Mauritius.

We include in our own personal reminiscences the building of four ships and two large schooners. The ship *Charles Carroll* was launched here in 1832; the *Lexington* and *Nantucket*, both under construction at the same time, in 1836, and the *Joseph Starbuck* in 1838. All these were fine, well-built ships, and did excellent service in the whaling times. It is a little remarkable that the *Joseph Starbuck*, after making a successful voyage was, when starting on a second, wrecked upon our own shores, and finished her career a few miles from the spot where she was built and launched. This happened in 1842. The *Charles Carroll* was sold in California soon after the gold fever broke out; the *Lexington* continued in the business until 1862, when she was lost at Strong's Island in the Pacific Ocean; and the *Nantucket* was shipwrecked upon the island of Naushon, while coming from a voyage in 1859.

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those oily surroundings on that hot day no appliances or power at hand could have stopped it, and the rich cargo, the accrued result of four years of active work, would quickly have been turned into uncommercial smoke. The quick way in which it was smothered out was a relief to all; and herein lies a valuable lesson of experience. Anything in our lives or our surroundings which is liable to burst out into a flame of malicious or injurious activity can be best treated by smothering.

These days of glorious and profitable activity which were participated in mostly by our own townspeople, aided by only a few Kanakas and other helpers, were destined to cease. The final results are described also by Bliss in a few terse lines:

"At last the tide turned, and the prosperity of Nantucket began to depart. Its sounds of industry became fainter; its wharves fell into decay; its population decreased in numbers; its marine philosophers drifted away to the unknown sea; and when in the year 1869, the last whaling ship sailed from the harbor bar, silence dropped his mantle on the town."

[Note.—Mr. Coffin's next article will be in connection with "The Great Fire," which devastated Nantucket sixty-eight years ago—July 13, 1846.]

July 4, 1914

See Shipping  
Previous Page

The rope which was strong enough to make the Admiral's "sleigh-ride" possible was, without doubt, made in one of these rope-walks. The boatmen know that the whale will not circumnavigate the globe with them, for, big as he is, he is a red-blooded air breather, and must soon stop for breath; so they let him run, but keep on the alert for emergencies, and if it must be, the sharp knife was ready to cut the line and end all danger—but with the loss of the whale.

#### THE WHALING CAPTAINS.

The Nantucket whaling captains were a class of noble, large, well-built, bronzed, robust men, intelligent and having more than the average education of those times, cheerful and optimistic, resourceful for any emergency, but their labors and achievements were done for away from home—mostly in the Pacific Ocean. We have not been present when daring deeds have been done—and these are often in evidence on the high seas, even in peaceful pursuits, and when the long voyage was ended, many incidents and exploits of daring and courage were forgotten or seldom mentioned, being regarded as of little account. But we know of the risks attending the capture of the hugest animal of creation, and those reveal to us a knowledge of their heroism and achievements of a high order.

Their voices were deep, rich and musical, whether for low tones or full expression. What splendid basses for a large chorus! What genuine basso-profondos!

If musically inclined and instructed, how richly would they roll out their part in some of the numbers of Mendelssohn's "Elijah" such as number 20. "Thanks be to God!"—

"The stormy billows are high;  
Their fury is mighty, mighty their fury."

Or in Handel's "Messiah," especially the Hallelujah Chorus.

Or in that virile and grand piece, Greig's "Land Sighting." Any conductor would be satisfied in having one of them take the solo part—written for a baritone but often given to the strongest second base—beginning:

"Here the land is, this the strand is,  
Templed arches front the darkness."

Or finally, how correctly could they have rendered—"Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep!"

Once the writer was aboard one of the sound steamers on the western trip. The captain—one of the same quality but in a different line—was anxious to start away, but at Newport there was considerable freight that evening. He leaned over the gang way of the second deck and in a quiet, strong voice called out to the deck hands: "Lively there, boys, lively." None of them looked up to see where the voice came from; they all knew the voice and got at their work with redoubled activity. There was no faultfinding or querulousness in such a voice, it was strong and deep, and carried with it the power of command; and shortly the big steamer was headed out towards Point Judith—"P'int Judah" as the old coasters called it.

These strong, mellow voices are not common, especially in church choirs. In our church choirs how surely is it the case that there is lacking the full and sonorous bass; and consequently how often is the fact noticed that the church choirs are not properly balanced.

In much of the music of our choirs there is little of the choral character, the only effective vocal utterance being that of the high-pitched soprano. Solo singing, of music for any one part, has its fitting place in church music; but a practical monopoly of soloism—either from indifferent tolerance, or lack of strength in the other parts—is not good choral form; and of all music for church and sacred purposes choral music is best. Large choirs are usually well balanced, but not always.

July 25, 1914

#### An Historic Picture.

Editor of The Inquirer and Mirror:

Transition from a wood carver's block to the easel and palette of an artist became easy to James Walter Folger, a great grandson of the late Hon. Walter Folger, astronomer and mathematician. His recent historical picture in oil colors attests his genius, and gives promise of future accomplishment to his credit.

Ship building on Brant point was the artist's theme, the home coming of "ships that pass in the night," loaded with sperm oil, coming down to Nantucket bar, rounding Brant point into the haven where they would be. While these incidents were transpiring, all so familiar to our older residents, our artist was not born; but later on, he had ever so studiously read in books, and in thumb-worn manuscripts, of this lucrative industry; he had become interested in the island's traditions, often spell-bound by graphic recitals of the exploits of our navigators—only a few of whom survive to recount their thrilling sea stories.

In a word, he had so thoroughly imbibed the spirit of these "toilers of the sea," that with no thought of failure to develop what lay hidden in his mental film, he confidently drew upon his imagination at the first dash of his brush. What a broad subject it was! "A View of Brant Point, and Entrance to Harbor of Nantucket, Mass., from 1820 to 1842," was its title.

At once the difficulties of his task, the ever so annoying criticisms of those who did not, or would not understand the inspiration that encouraged him, sank into insignificance. Every mark of his brush revealed to him, only, his completed picture, as to Powers, the sculptor, his beautiful "Greek Slave" was visible while he poised his chisel. Mr. Folger realized the permanent truth once uttered by Thoreau, of "Walden Woods:" "Imagination is the air of mind, in which it lives and breathes." The shaping influence of imagination was his invisible companion daily, as he worked alone in the attic chamber of his cozy home on Joy street.

Reading from left to right, the picture is descriptive as follows: The ship building on the stocks is the Joseph Starbuck, the last whaling-ship built in these ship-yards (1838). Next is shown a marine railway for smaller crafts to be repaired; a plank-pen; ship in cradle on large railway being calked, with a horse attached to the windlass. The style of lighthouse in vogue on Brant point in 1820 is next shown. The bark Peru, the first vessel to use the camels, is being towed in by steamer Telegraph, with a full cargo of 100 barrels of sperm oil (1842). [The first ship towed out in the camels was the Phebe in 1842.]

This picture represents the activity on and about Brant point during the palmy days of Nantucket, when whaling was at its height, with many ships hailing from this port, numerous oil works, coopers' shops, candle houses, rope-walks, etc.

I can vouch for the drawing of the bark Peru, for, while a little boy, my father took me to Brant point, long ago as 1842, time of the bark's arrival. At this late day I seem to inhale the sea breeze, and the slightest odor of tar and oakum from the ship's deck. I hear the rippling waves on the pebbly beach, the scream of a solitary sea gull, and I recollect my boyish pride when my father told me that my uncle, Joshua Coffin, was the successful captain of the Peru. Grand-daughters of the late Captain Coffin, one of Nantucket's most intrepid whalers, now live in Auburn, N. Y., in whose homes the Inquirer and Mirror is numbered among favorite family papers. Of the building of the whale-ship Joseph Starbuck, many islanders can recall the date, and repeat with no little pride, Longfellow's lines:

"We know what master laid thy keel,  
What workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,  
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,  
In what a furnace, what a heat,  
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope."

To-day many of our citizens with me, can see back of this picture, another. Like a mirage the vision appears to us. From the glowing halo of a sacred remembrance, invisible to the outward eye, come, one by one, portraits of respected merchants and ship owners of Nantucket's halcyon days, faces of gentle women departed this life, the like of whom we shall never see again within our island borders.

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Steamer Massachusetts Towing the Ship Constitution out of Nantucket Harbor in the "Camels," September 23, 1842.

### The Nantucket "Camels."

In view of the present "seventeen-foot-channel" leading into Nantucket harbor, and the prospect of a much larger anchorage area inside of Brant point before next summer, it is interesting to note that it was just seventy years ago that the queer maritime institution known as "the camels" made its appearance in Nantucket harbor and was used for transporting whaleships over the "bar," where there was, at that time, a scant six feet of water.

Nantucket was the first (and probably only) place in this country to use camels, but they had been used over in Holland as early as 1688. The shallow water on Nantucket bar was a detriment to the prosperity of the island, and it was owing to this shoal water at the very entrance to the harbor that for several years it had been necessary for the Nantucket ship-owners to fit out and unload their ships over at Edgartown.

Peter F. Ewer superintended the construction of the camels, commencing the work in the spring of 1842 and completing it the latter part of August of the same year. The "camels" was really two floating dry-docks, which could be filled with water and sunk, one on each side of the vessel, and then drawn together by means of heavy chains running under the vessel's bottom, the craft thus being made secure. When everything was in readiness, the water was pumped out of the camels and the ship thus brought up out of the water between the two sections. Being flat-bottomed, with a draft of only 2 feet 10 inches, the camels could float in water very much shallower than loaded ships required, and it was by their use that the whalers leaving or entering port, heavily laden, could be "lightered" over the bar.

Each camel was 135 feet long, with a depth of 19 feet, and a width of 29 feet on the bottom and 20 feet on deck. When "sunk," each section contained 12,000 barrels of water, which could be forced out by double-action pumps operated by 6-horse-power engines, each camel having a separate pumping outfit, capable of throwing 30 barrels of water per minute. Each camel was also equipped with a propeller, so that when there was no ship between them, each could go from place to place under its own steam. The whole arrangement was novel, but entirely practicable, yet Mr. Ewer and the promoters of the Camel Company received all sorts of discouragements on every hand, few persons believing the project would amount to anything. The total cost of construction was \$26,000—quite a large sum for an experiment.

The first trial of the camels was made on August 22, when the ship Phebe was ready for sea, and it was not surprising that the first trial was a failure. A plank burst out under pressure of the water and on that account the experiment was postponed until the following Sunday. This trial was also a failure, for the chains beneath the vessel began to snap asunder and it was necessary to abandon the attempt that day, the Phebe finally proceeding on her voyage without "cameling" over the bar.

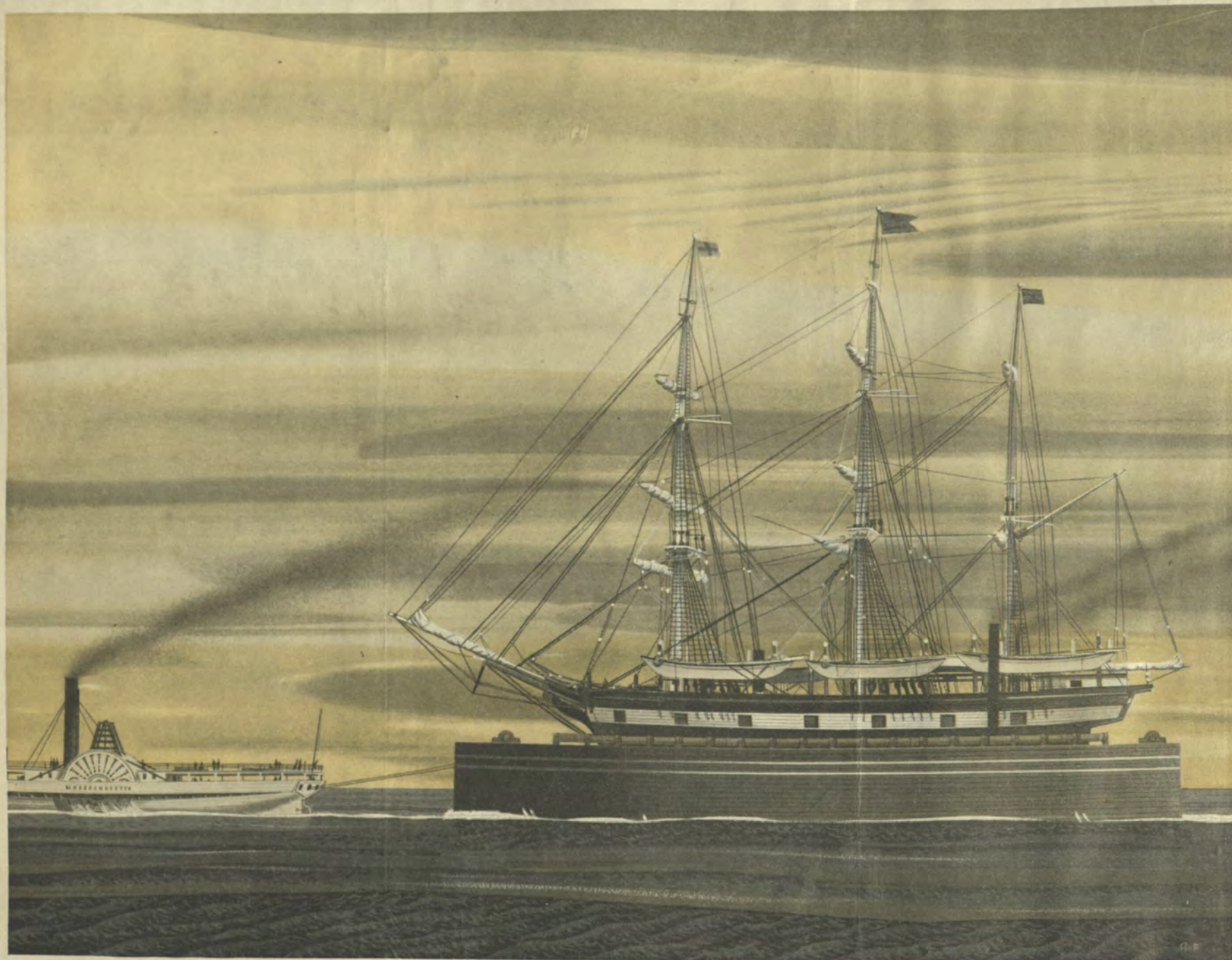
Heavier chains were then secured and a month later the ship Constitution was run into the camels and towed over the bar in forty-two minutes, the operation being very successful in every way and proving the practicability of the camels—to the delight of Mr. Ewer and his friends.

The first ship brought in by the camels was the Peru, on October 14, 1842, and from that time on the camels were frequently used. The fact that Nantucket's whaling industry was on the decline at that period, however, proved that the camels were actually built about twenty years too late, for twelve years after their construction they were broken up (in 1854). The general appearance of the camels is preserved in a model on exhibition in the rooms of the Nantucket Historical Association.

[Note.—The complete story of the camels forms a chapter in "The Story of the Island Steamers."]

DECEMBER 14, 1912





## How they carried a whaler over the bar



WHENEVER you think of whaling, you think of New Bedford and Nantucket. The two towns were rivals from the start.

By the year 1841, New Bedford was a name known wherever men hunted the whale, and its prosperity had kept pace with its fame. But Nantucket, alas, had fallen far behind her rival as a whaling port.

Most of Nantucket's trouble could be attributed to a sand bar about three miles offshore. Deeply laden whalers needed plenty of water under them, and many of the captains refused to chance this bar, preferring the deeper water at New Bedford.

But the men of Nantucket were not the kind to sit by idly and watch their whaling industry vanish. "Yankee ingenuity" was called upon to perform a miracle. And "Yankee ingenuity" in the person of Peter F. Ewer, Esq., did it! He showed Nantucket how these great whaling vessels could literally be carried across the dangerous bar.

Peter Ewer's astounding invention was known locally as a "camel." Actually, it was a great, ingenious floating drydock, consisting of two concave compartments 135 feet long, which could be partially submerged and fitted snugly to the sides of the ships. Underneath they were connected by stout chains. Each section had a powerful pump, which, after the vessel was placed between them, ejected the water and thus floated compartments, ship and all, higher and higher until they could safely clear the bar.

Whaling men had seen many strange sights in their travels. But never had any of them seen anything like Peter Ewer's "camel," the device that carried ships over the bar and kept Nantucket in the whaling trade.

Like the men of Nantucket, most of us have our obstacles to overcome before we can know real prosperity and security. But unlike the one sand bar off Nantucket, there are always many uncharted bars and reefs ahead of us on which our hopes and plans may come to grief.

For instance, an accident may impair our ability to make a living; a fire may take our home and furnishings; and an automobile smashup may involve us in costly law suits. We know that these dangers exist, for we have seen people run afoul of them. But fortunately, we also know how these dangers may be nullified.

The device we have perfected to carry us over these danger spots is insurance. Many men have placed their dependence on this device, and it has carried them through when accident, fire, or some other misfortune loomed unexpectedly.

No man can afford to be without this wonderful device; no one of us is so clever a navigator that he can safely sail without it.

A Travelers Agent or Insurance Broker can give you good advice on the kinds of insurance protection you should have.

Moral: Insure in The Travelers. All forms of insurance. The Travelers Insurance Company, The Travelers Indemnity Company, The Travelers Fire Insurance Company, Hartford, Connecticut.



Among the anniversaries of interesting and important events that Nantucket marks this year none is more revealing of the enterprise of the olden day than the story of the "Camels."

Time seems to have a double significance in connection with the history of this island. So many exciting matters have occurred within the span of the nineteenth century that to look back upon a century so filled with incident tends to place it further in the recesses of the years. And so, when it is recalled that the "Camels" were a product of the year 1841, it seems as though, in the light of intervening happenings, that is much longer ago than ninety-five years.

Nantucket Bar—a long, narrow, sand bank—had been a barrier across the entrance to Nantucket harbor for centuries. But it was not until the beginning of the great whaling era known as the "Palmy Days" that this sand-bar became a menace to the future prosperity of the island.

After the war of 1812, the whale-ships became increased in tonnage, their broad hulls deepened to make room for larger cargoes of whale oil. Returning home with their greasy holds filled with huge casks of oil, the ships had to lighten their oil in the harbor of Edgartown, or lay in back of the bar while the lighters worked. Similarly, in outfitting the ships, the same condition existed.

This was an expensive proposition to the Nantucket shipowners. It cost \$1000 for this extra lightering of outward bound and newly arrived ships. Competition by other ports had become stronger, and the port of New Bedford, which had been the most serious rival, now began to outstrip the island-port.

In view of the fact that Nantucket had unsuccessfully sought Federal aid for thirty-five years, the merchants were forced to rely upon the superior knowledge of the island whaling captains in the race to maintain the proud position as the leading whaling port. But when the islanders drifted away, as was only natural, to become masters of ships sailing from rival ports, the situation became more and more alarming. In the early years of the 1800's, the government had been petitioned to build a jetty, so that the tides could scour out a channel across the bar, but political foes saw to it that this aid was not given the island.

Then came the "Camels." They were proposed by Peter F. Ewer, who was seeking to form a corporation here. In the issue of February 27, 1841, an advertisement appeared in the columns of *The Inquirer*, giving the comparative costs of lightering in the old manner and lightering by the "Camels." According to the figures the island merchants would save on inward and outward bound charges a total of \$693.56.

These "Camels" were two long pontoons, shaped like a ship's hull on one side and square on the other, held together by chains. Into this more or less floating dry-dock, a ship was headed, and the pontoons closely fastened on either side. Water was pumped into the "Camels" until they

had sunk to a certain level alongside the ship. The chains being fastened, this water was pumped out, and the ship lifted over the bar as a steamboat hauled the "Camels." Each of the floating pontoons was flat-bottomed, with a beam of 29 feet at the bottom and 20 feet at the deck, and 135 feet long.

Despite the fact that detailed costs and savings were the best arguments in favor of the establishing of the "Camels" as a business proposition, the idea was looked upon with disfavor by many ship-masters. On the other hand, many merchants and ship-owners were eager to adopt the plan. *The Inquirer*, through Editor Samuel Haynes Jenks, commented:

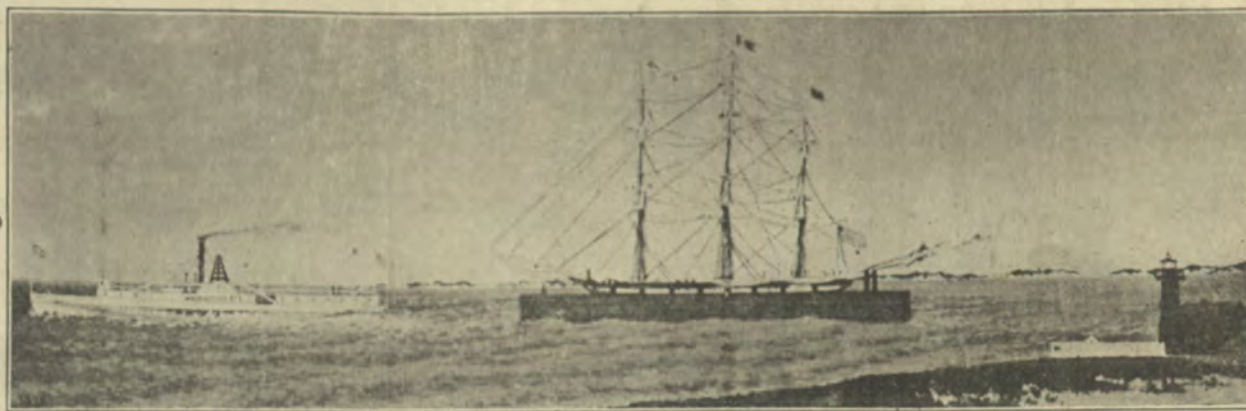
"We would especially commend the introduction of the *Camels* to the consideration of capitalists and ship owners. The object of the sponsor (Mr. Ewer) is to interest the commercial public in a matter which promises much general utility. If this apparatus can accomplish what is claimed for it—and we see no possible reason why it may not—one of the greatest causes of perplexity and of loss, incident to the unfortunate natural condition of our harbor and of its entrances, will have been surmounted by its adoption.

"Of course, it is for those more immediately interested to examine the statistics presented by our correspondent; and we trust that the investigation suggested will result in the construction and successful employment of the machinery in question. If our ships can be laden and unladen at our wharves, without regard to the obstruction offered by the Bar, it is certainly a desideratum in which all classes of the community ought to feel interested."

That the "Camels" would take a loaded ship, out or in, over the bar was in itself worthy of the combined efforts of ship-owner and ship-master. But, as in every laudable undertaking, there was a "noisy minority" who were ready to ridicule the proposition, and this class of folk did not hesitate to make themselves heard.

A model of the proposed apparatus had been constructed, together with a whaleship model, both on a scale sufficiently large to enable spectators to comprehend the detailed workings of the scheme. These models were placed on exhibition at the boat-builder's shop of Messrs. Thurber & Crosby, near the head of Commercial Wharf.

## The "Camels" Were Proposed Ninety-Five Years Ago.



Steamboat *Massachusetts* towing the whaleship *Constitution* in the "Camels" around Brant point. The first attempt to take a ship out was made with the *Phebe*, owned by Christopher Mitchell. This was not a success. A few days later (Sept. 22, 1842) the *Constitution* was taken out. Charles G. & Henry Coffin very generously allowed their outward bound ship act as a test for the first successful trip of the "Camels" over the bar.

It may be significant to remark here, that the practicability of applying this sort of floating dry-dock to the aid of shipping had constituted a theme of considerable discussion some thirteen years before—in 1828. The subject was then thoroughly investigated. As a result, it was agreed that the introduction of "Camels", from the point of view of both economy and convenience, was earnestly to be desired.

At that time all the possible arguments and objections against their use were at length narrowed down to the single fact that a steamboat must be necessary to tow the apparatus and enclosed ship over the bar. With steamboats available, this objection was at last overcome.

The advertisement which appeared in 1841 was very specific in regard to all the costs and expenses incident in the use of "Camels" and the continuance of the old system of lightering. These were listed as follows:

Outward and Inward Bound at Edgartown.	
Outward Bound.	
Lightering ship of 50½ tons	\$110.00
Pilot to Edgartown	15.00
Steamboat to tow the ship	75.00
Extra labor at Edgartown	50.00
Wharfage, storage, victualling, watering, watching, losses, agents' expenses, etc.,	100.00
1-4% extra Insurance of ship and cargo to Edgartown—\$35,000	87.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$437.50</b>
Inward Bound.	
2,254 bbls. of oil and sundries from Edgartown, being average lighter acct. on 92 ships, at 12 cents	\$270.54
Steamboat from Edgartown	75.00
Pilot from Edgartown	15.00
Losses, expenses, provisions, etc., at Edgartown	100.00
1-4% extra insurance on \$40,000 (and many are worth \$80,000)	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$560.00</b>
Outward bound,	\$437.50
Inward Bound	560.54
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$998.04</b>

### Outward and Inward Bound with Camels.

Outward Bound.	
To take a ship of 350½ tons (being average tonnage) over the bar, and place here safely in 4 fathoms of water, with Camels, at 60 cts per ton,	\$210.30
Steamboat to tow Camels and ship	50.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$260.00</b>

Inward Bound.	
For 1943½ bbls. of whale and sperm oil, and other articles equal to 311 3-16 bbls., making 2254½ bbls. average	
Lighter account of 92 ships for last 5 years at 17 cents per bbl.	\$383.26½
Steamboat to tow	50.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$433.26½</b>

Balance on each ship in favor of the "Camels"	\$304.47½
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### Earnings of the Camels.

Outward Bound Ships.	
To carry 20 ships over the bar at 60 cts. per ton, is \$210.30 per ship, for 20 ships	\$4,206.00
Inward Bound Ships.	
20 ships of 2254½ bbls. Lighter acct. per ship at 17 cents per bbl. is	\$7,665.30
and \$383.26½ per ship	
	<b>\$11,871.30</b>

Yearly Expenses of "Camels."	
Foreman and engineer	\$500.00
20 days' labor, for one day in fixing shores and bilge-blocks under the ships, and say we have 20 ships in and 20 ships out, making 40 days labor for 20 men—800 days' labor at \$1.25 per day	1000.00
Wharfage for one year	100.00
Repairs will average yearly	100.00
Fuel, Oil etc. for two engines	150.00
Incidental expenses	500.00
Insurance at 2%, \$20,000	400.00
Agent's salary yearly	500.00
Net profit yearly to the stockholders on a cost of \$26,000, is 32 3-4 per cent	8,521.30
	<b>\$11,871.30</b>

OVER



### "Camels" Would Save \$600.00 Yearly.

From the above calculations it appeared that by using "Camels" to bring in and carry ships over the bar there would be a saving of 30 1/2%, between lightering and loading the ships at Edgartown and loading them at the wharves in Nantucket; showing a saving in one year to the ship owners of Nantucket of over \$6,000. Besides this, the stockholders in the ownership of the "Camels" would receive 32 1/2% on their investment in the apparatus.

### Scheme Not a New Experiment.

Mr. Ewer, in his advertisement, also stated the following facts in relation to his proposition:

"The use of Camels is no new experiment, as they were invented and used by M. M. Bakker in Holland as early as 1688, and took their names from their great strength. They were first built by the Dutch at Amsterdam, for taking large ships over the Pampus, a passage between two sand banks in the Zuyder Zee, opposite the mouth of the river Y, about six miles from the city of Amsterdam. The Russians have also used Camels for taking their large ships over the shoals that are formed in the Neva; and have them of various sizes, some as large as 217 feet long and 36 feet in breadth. They have also been used in Venice, and no accident has ever happened by using them."

The great advantage in costs, as contrasted with the old methods of lightering, of course, were of primary importance, but there were other considerations which appealed to ship-owners and whaling masters.

First, there was the delay caused to the ship in the arrival of lighters due to head winds and bad weather. This was of considerable importance when ships of several ports returned home at the same time and marketing oil depended upon the promptness in getting it to the refineries and thence to market.

Then there was the risk of staving in a cask of the valuable sperm oil when unloading into a lighter, a task made doubly difficult in rough weather back of the bar.

Savings amounted into hundreds of dollars in accounting the cost of victualling the crew of the ship, the lightering crew, laborers, etc., with corresponding savings in wharfage, carting, and other necessary incidentals.

Another important saving came in the fact that with the use of the "Camels" the outward cargo would be got on board "dry," as the term went, and all the articles properly stowed under the immediate care of the owners.

Then there was the saving of several weeks' interest on the outfits, and on the return cargoes, as well as of the cost of conveying both to or from Edgartown, some 20 miles away.

The Story of the Island Steamers, by Harry B. Turner, describes the "Camels" in some detail, as follows:

"They were a queer-looking craft, very much like two long, large boxes floating side by side, and held together at the ends by very large iron chains. The outer sides were almost straight up and down, but the inner sides were curved, making, when the

two sections were drawn together, an interior basin, just the shape of the bottom of a ship. The plan was for the camels to be separated just far enough to allow the ship to be hauled into this basin between the two sections, then to be drawn and held fastened together by the chains, holding the ship between them, so that the camels and ship could be towed over the shallower places in the channel to the wharf.

"When completed the camels were each 135 feet long, with a depth of 19 feet, and a width of 29 feet on the bottom and 20 feet on deck. They drew 2 feet 10 inches in the level, and were connected by 15 chains, five of 1 1/2 inches in diameter and ten of 1 3/8 inches, which bore eight hundred tons in weight, it requiring two hundred tons to sink the camels a foot into the water.

"Each camel was divided into two parts, the 'lower hold,' and between decks. To get the camels under the ship, it was necessary to sink them to the proper depth, and to do this the lower hold of each camel was built with several chambers, into which the water could be admitted through the 'gates' which could be readily opened or closed, as occasion required.

"On the bottom of each camel, inside, was a long trough or 'raceway' about 4 feet wide and 1 1/2 feet high, running the length of the camels, by means of which the water was let in from without, and from which the lower water rooms were filled. When the chambers were filled with water, each camel sank so that the bottom of the interior basin was below the bottom of the ship. The vessel was then hauled in and the two sections of camels drawn together and securely held there by massive chains, the water gates were closed, the water was pumped by the chambers, and the camels, thus lightened, gradually rose, lifting the ship with them, and were ready to be towed together over the bar and the inner flats and shoals to the wharf.

"Each camel was equipped with a steam engine, which operated the strong pumps by which the water was drawn from the chambers, and also turned the heavy windlasses which wound up the heavy chains. Upon arriving near the wharf, the water was let into the chambers, and the camels gradually sank, letting the ship down as gently as she had been previously raised. The chains were loosened, the camels moved apart, and the ship warped up to her berth, after which the water was once more pumped out over the camels, which rose again and were ready for the next job.

It was not until a year had elapsed that Peter Folger Ewer realized his plan for the construction of the "Camels." The spring of 1842 saw the building and launching of the new marine apparatus, but it was not until August of that year that they were given an opportunity to show their worth.

The first trial was a failure—a blow to the company's hopes. But they had surmounted too many obstacles to be turned back from their purpose, and the next attempt was successful in every way.

On the 22nd of August, 1842, the whaleship *Phebe*, owned by Christopher Mitchell & Co., outward bound, became the first ship to be enclosed by the "Camels." Three attempts were made to take the ship out—and three times the apparatus failed to function, the last try being made on the Sept. 4, as a result of which the ship was damaged.

But the firm of Charles G. & Henry Coffin joined with the Mitchell's in the effort to prove the practicability of the "Camels," allowing their whaleship *Constitution* to be placed in the pontoons and towed out over the bar. This trial was a complete success, it requiring but 42 minutes to complete the distance from Brant point out to and over the bar, steamer *Massachusetts* supplying the motive power.

But the account of the further episodes in the history of Mr. Ewer's "Camels" is another story. Suffice for this article to show that the official launching of the plan occurred ninety-five years ago at this time of year.

APRIL 25, 1936.

### Rugged Reminder of "Camels" Still Exists.

At the rear of the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Orin K. Coffin, on North Liberty street, stand four pieces of timber which years ago were evidently placed there as part of a boundary line. They are upright with the bottoms buried in the ground some two or three feet.

The four pieces of timber are rather interesting historically, for they are all that remain of the "camels", the floating dry-dock built in 1842 by Peter F. Ewer for carrying the Nantucket whaleships over the bar. The "camels" did service a number of years and were used successfully, but with the decline of the whale fishery they were abandoned and, in 1854, were broken up on the south beach a short distance from Commercial wharf.

So far as we can ascertain the four junks of timber in the Coffin yard on North Liberty street are the only pieces of the "camels" that can be found today. These timbers have many a copper nail showing in them, but there is no way to tell what part of the equipment they came from. Alonzo D. Fisher, one of our aged citizens, recalls that, as a resident in the vicinity years ago, he always knew that the pieces of wood came from the "camels", but just how or why, he does not know.

The first attempt to use the "camels" after they were constructed in 1842 resulted in a failure. The ship *Phebe* was to be run into them and the two sections of dry-dock were being sunk to receive the vessel, when a plank burst from the side of one of the water rooms, owing to the immense pressure, and the rush of water put the fires out under the boiler.

The next afternoon another attempt was made, but a mistake in the orders to close the stern gates caused one of the "camels" to heel over so as to endanger the ship. A third attempt was made three days later, when the steamer *Telegraph* towed the *Phebe* out into the deep water off Brant point, where the "camels" were sunk and the ship taken in.

Heavy chains that had been ordered with which the two sections were to be drawn together, had not arrived by that time, so fifteen sets of chain cables were borrowed, belonging to ships at the wharves. When the "Phebe" was being raised the chains began to snap, one by one and the ship went down between the "camels" into the water. The mishap injured the "Phebe's" copper bottom so that she had to be taken in-shore and repairs made.

On the 23rd of September, 1842, however, the "camels" were proved a success, when the whaleship *Constitution* was taken out in them and it required only forty-two minutes to transport the vessel from Brant point outside the bar, where she was released into deep water and sailed away on her voyage to the South Pacific.

The first ship brought in from sea in the "camels" was the *Peru*, which came in with 1340 barrels of oil from the east coast of Africa, October 13, 1842. Bells were rung, guns were fired, and the citizens turned out in force to greet her arrival.

The last ship brought in before the use of the "camels" was abandoned was the *Martha*, which arrived at the bar June 8, 1849, and was brought in the following day with 1667 barrels of sperm oil in her hold.

Correspondence Inquirer and Mirror.

### The Nantucket Camels.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—In reply to a query of mine concerning the camels, Mr. F. C. Sanford has courteously furnished me, in a private letter, with the names of the first four ships that were lifted over the bar. It struck me that it might be well to make the information he gives a matter of historical record by its publication in your columns. With his permission I send below an extract from his interesting letter, with the request that you will make room for it in the INQUIRER AND MIRROR.

Mr. Sanford writes as follows, viz:

"In 1842 the marine camels were completed under the superintendence of the late Peter F. Ewer. In September the ship *Phebe*, belonging to Messrs. C. Mitchell & Co., was made ready for sea; and she was taken out into deep water at Brant Point; the camels also; they were sunk and the ship taken in. The chain cables with which the camels were to be bound together, had not been received at the time, and fifteen chain-cables were borrowed, belonging to ships at the wharf, while she lay ready to be taken out to sea. When the ship was enclosed in the camels, and the latter were raising her, these chains began to snap asunder, as each one parted, others became weaker; and soon all of them gave way and the ship went down into the water. You could hear each chain go off with a noise like a cannon, which was heard throughout the town. The ship's copper was supposed to be damaged, rendering it necessary to take the *Phebe* back, and heave her out again. This of course involved time. The ship *Constitution* next being ready, she was the next ship taken in. This experiment was a success, and she went to sea at once from the bar. She belonged to Charles G. & Henry Coffin. The first ship taken in from sea was the ship *Peru*, belonging to David Joy. The second from sea was the *Daniel Webster*, belonging to Jared Coffin and Christopher Wyer, in October. The third, in November, was the *Rambler*, belonging to me. The *Peru* is still in existence, also the *Daniel Webster*, and both whaling yet. The *Phebe* was condemned at Pernambuco, in October, 1846; the *Constitution* was condemned here in 1852; the *Rambler* was condemned at Navigator Islands in 1856. The camels were broken up in 1854."

F. C. E.

Oct. 2, 1937

May 20, 1882



**THE CAMELS.** One of these prodigious artificial sea-monsters was launched on Wednesday morning at five o'clock with very little difficulty; and on Thursday night somewhere about "the witching time" was drawn up to the Commercial Wharf. She draws 34 inches of water on a level, or 24 on the concave side and forty five on the outside. These Camels are 134 feet long, and 19 feet deep, and are 26 feet wide on deck and 28 feet wide on the bottom. When in operation they are tied together by fifteen chains passing through them under the bottom of the ship to be transported. When it is necessary to lighten them, after they have been placed under the ship, they are pumped out by a six horse engine. It requires a barthen of 200 tons to settle them one foot.

These are the first Camels ever launched in America. The Master Builder is Mr John G. Thurber, who deserves no little credit for the excellent manner in which he has discharged his trust—having had no former experience in this singular sort of architecture and having never seen one of these huge machines before he completed the present ones. It is expected that the other Camel will be launched at 7 o'clock this evening.

Baxter's Whaling Fleet, consisting of five beautiful ships, in the act of chasing, killing, cutting and trying the whale, storing the oil, &c., is now on exhibition at the store on Centre street next north of Hooper's saloon. This is probably the only exhibition of the kind in the world, and from it persons can acquire a most accurate knowledge of the whaling business. Capt. Baxter is an old whaler, and has faithfully delineated the results of his experience. Pay him a visit.

We clip the following article from the Barnstable Patriot of this week, evidently written by one who found much enjoyment in an excursion that has, we believe, never before been deemed worthy the notice of the public press. In fact, particularly in the days of the old Telegraph, towing was regarded as a most disagreeable operation, and every one who could avoided taking passage when a ship was to be "pulled" in or out of the harbor; but the Island Home performs the work with such facility that towing has become a source of pleasure rather than discomfort. Read what he says:—

#### Taking a Whale-Ship over the Bar at Nantucket.

HYANNIS, July 23, 1858.

Dear Major: Having a few moments to spare, I thought I could not employ them better than by dropping you a few lines. Major, in your many visits to Nantucket, have you ever seen them take a whale-ship over the Bar? If not, there is something new for you to see yet. And I hope you may have the pleasure, under as favorable circumstances as the writer of this did, to see it. Our favorite steamer Island Home had made her berth alongside of the wharf, the fire was allowed to go out, the passengers landed, and everything had the appearance that business was done for the day. But not so; about nine o'clock in the evening I had the pleasure of meeting Captain Brown, the commander of the Island Home, whose smiling face and friendly shake of the hand, pleasantly said, "there is something going on for a stranger to see." "Well, Captain, not going to run an express to Hyannis to-night?" "No, but I am going to take a ship over the Bar."

I had seen a great many ladies and gentlemen promenading the street that leads down to the wharf, but I thought they were in pursuit of the pure cool-air that came off from the waters, for a more beautiful evening I never saw. The moon was full and no clouds to be seen, and there was just breeze enough to produce a small ripple on the placid waters of the harbor.

I accepted the very kind invitation from the gallant commander of the Island Home, to go on board with him and see the ship over the Bar. A few taps on the bell gave notice that the steamer was about to start out of the dock to make fast to the ship; then there was a rush of young ladies and gentlemen to get on board, and a more joyous set I never saw.

On going on board at the forward gangway and looking forward, there was a ring of about twenty-five young men, and in the middle one with an accordion, discoursing very good music of the Virginia break-down sort, and three or four tripping the light (or heavy) fantastic toe, in the most approved negro style. As I looked at those young men, it reminded me of such scenes as I have seen on the deck of a whale-ship in the South Pacific Ocean, of an evening like this, when thousands of miles from home.

On going up on the promenade deck, another joyous sight met the eye, young ladies were seated in groups and singing some very pretty songs, while others were promenading the deck on the arm of some young gentlemen, perhaps their future partners in life. It so may their life always be as happy as it appeared to be while towing the ship over the Bar. Above all those joyous sounds could be plainly heard the voice of Capt. Brown, giving his orders to the men, and attending in person to see that the two large hawsers were promptly made fast for a heavy tug, in case the ship should ground hard on the Bar. Everything being ready, the Captain takes the helm. One touch on the gong notified the engineer to start the iron horse. The steam is let on, the horse gives a few breaths, and the wheels revolve, and the ship leaves her berth, when it will be sometime before she will return again. We approach the first buoy on the Bar, the hawsers are trimmed so as to point the ship right; two taps on the going lets the engineer know it, more steam is let on, the hawsers strain, and the ship's keel grates on the sand, but the steamer goes ahead, and we approach the outer buoy. We pass it, the ship is in deep water, and then goes up three hearty cheers for the success of the ship on her present voyage. The ship is cast off from the steamer; the hawsers hauled on board, and we returned to the wharf, highly pleased with the excursion. The party separated for their homes, and to their beds, perhaps to dream of the pleasure of towing a ship over the Bar. The steamer Island Home is as fine a boat as navigates our waters, and with the gentlemanlike deportment of Capt. Brown and his officers, I should think that she must soon become a great favorite with the traveling public.

CARL BOY.

## GOLDEN DAYS OF WHALING

### Past Exploits Old Whalers Tell About

With 10 whalers out of the Arctic fleet of 20 returning to port "clean"—without having turned up a fin—and with only 70,000 pounds of whalebone to show for the entire cruise of the whole fleet, the old whalers of New Bedford are in these days trying to find comfort in telling again about the achievements of Yankee whalers in the past and the big profits some of the cruises brought. For instance, it was a Nantucket man, Captain Folger, who first charted the Gulf stream. Benjamin Franklin caused this chart to be engraved for the use of navigators, and it is substantially correct today.

It was a New Bedford whaler, the Bedford, which was the first ship that ever flew the "rebellious 13 stripes" of America in any English port. She was despatched from Massachusetts the moment peace was declared, and she arrived in the Thames with her cargo of oil before all the acts of Parliament against the "rebels" had been rescinded.

In 1788 the logbook of the Nantucket ship Penelope recorded her arrival in the Arctic seas in 78 north latitude, with "160 American whaleships in sight." And this point, so far north that it is still a polar adventure for expeditions to reach it, was reached in those early days by little craft which did not even have coppered bottoms.

Long before that solitary American whalers had penetrated into the frozen seas. Indeed, in 1733 a Boston schooner had tried to find the northwest passage and had spent seven or eight months in the ice.

It was the sperm whale that first induced American whalers to round the horn and enter the Pacific. In 1791 seven ships sailed around the horn from Nantucket and New Bedford.

Then began the era of enterprise, during which the whaleships carried the American flag into every spot on the globe, one Nantucket man entering even the Red Sea.

In those days the meeting ground of the whalers was off the islands of Oahu and Maui, in the Hawaiian group, and that land was then, in practice, as American as it is now in reality. The mail station was a deserted coral reef far to the west, known as Baker's Island, where a cask on a pole was used for the deposit of letters by every passing ship.

Even before the capture of right and bowhead whales had brought the American ships to the Arctic Ocean and the Behring Sea in force, small whalers from New England had ventured into unknown seas.

Before 1843 two Russian warships on a voyage of exploration sighted a group of islands in the Antarctic Ocean and had begun to send men ashore to take possession in the name of the Czar, when the fog lifted and they were amazed to see a little sailing sloop from Long Island riding quietly in the harbor. The Russians were disappointed and disgusted, but honest enough to name the islands Palmer's Land after the captain of the little sailboat.

The British ship Caribou had a similar experience at almost the same time, for she thought she had discovered the land now known as Hurd's Island, but on approaching she found the schooner Oxford of Fairhaven, Mass., there, engaged in whaling.

Many of the ships that opened the Pacific and Arctic fishery are afloat today and catching whales as bravely as if they were brand new. There is the famous old bark Morning Star, which, when last reported, had sailed out of Fayal in the Azores with 125 barrels of sperm oil which she had obtained since last July, when she left New Bedford on her cruise.

The Morning Star entered the Pacific fishery in 1853 and made rich hauls of oil and bone, even through the Civil war, evading privateers successfully and landing her cargo at a time when the market had soared to dizzy heights.

In one cruise of 270 days she killed 202 whales. She penetrated Hudson's Bay in 1884 and 1886, and brought back oil and bone that made her two voyages net more than \$30,000. This was at the time of top prices, when oil was worth \$1.65 a gallon and whalebone was selling for \$2.40 a pound.

Great as this record was it was excelled in that same period by Captain Ebenezer Morgan, who entered port in 1856 with \$150,000 worth of bone and oil.

Even before the Civil war, and without the aid of war prices the whalers of those days made fortunes in single voyages.

In 1855 the schooner Alabama, under Captain Consider Fisher of Sippican, made a six months' voyage and came in with \$13,000 worth of whales. She was worth only \$2200 originally with her full outfit. Another schooner, the James, took \$10,000 worth in three months.

Other great voyages were those of the Captain Richmond of New Bedford, which took \$35,000 worth of whales in two and one-half years in the Pacific Ocean in 1823. The Falmouth ship Uncas got \$30,000 worth in two years and eight

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F. C. E.

May 20, 1882







## When Nantucketers Captured Whales At Home.

Last week, Capt. Everett Coffin, a former Nantucketer now residing in Seattle, requested the reprinting of an account depicting the last whale chase which occurred off Nantucket. This took place in the year 1887. After a careful search through the files of *The Inquirer and Mirror*, the article requested was eventually uncovered.

Believing the account will be of more than ordinary interest, not only from an historic point of view but because it is an entertaining yarn, we reprint the greater portion of it as follows:

On Monday morning in April [runs the account] the Arcadian quiet of Nantucket out of season was broken. A whaleboat, with five sturdy rowers on the thwarts and Capt. Clisby of the whaling schooner *Era* at the steering oar, shot round the jetty at the mouth of the harbor, and in a few minutes drew alongside the barnacled timbers of Macy's wharf. The captain betook himself to an outfitter's shop, the men stopped to talk with old cronies on the street corners, and in a few minutes, without the intervention of Old Billy the town crier, all Nantucket knew that Capt. Clisby had taken a whale the Saturday before at Tuckernuck.

The monster was expected to rise that day, and the crew were now after the necessary gear to take "off" the blubber and try it out. Half a dozen men were loading into a cart an iron trying pot, whose size I can best indicate by saying that it held 180 gallons and weighed 600 pounds. Two others were coiling in the streets about fifty fathoms of rope that was being slowly paid out from the dim recesses of Macy's store, while as many more were rolling to the head of the wharf huge casks, holding seven barrels each, whose pickled staves and huge heads gummed with oil told of more than one voyage round to the Pacific.

Capt. Clisby, a clear-eyed, wiry, stout Nantucketer of perhaps thirty-five, told me he intended to land the whale on the north beach of Tuckernuck. I readily obtained permission to accompany the party going out to Tuckernuck, to transport the casks and other appliances. So after the try-pot, the four casks, the coil of rope, two lances, two harpoons, several spades, a mincing-knife, a boarding-knife, and a huge iron skimmer had been loaded on the little *Vesta*, we began beating down harbor and were soon out to sea.

The "crew" comprised Capt. Jernegan and mate Horace Cash, both old whalemens, and I was sole passenger. Away to the westward nine miles, the island of Tuckernuck, our destination, rose dimly out of the haze. It was not exactly a contrary wind that befell the *Vesta*, once outside the harbor, but no wind at all—a dead calm.

By and by, lying helpless, we saw the whaleboat shooting out beyond the jetty and come up at a spanking rate, the oars rising and falling with the precision of a man-of-war boat. It reached us just as a light breeze sprang up from the westward, the men hove a light line aboard, and the *Vesta* took the lighter boat in tow, part of the crew clambering aboard. Capt. Clisby was among the former which gave the passenger an opportunity to inquire about the taking of a whale.

Capt. Clisby was inclined to speak modestly of his exploits. "We first sighted a whale off Tuckernuck," he began, "last Tuesday morning. I was visiting my mate, George Coffin, on Tuckernuck at the time, and that morning about seven he came in with the news that whales were blowing off the island. Sure enough, they were there, beauties, showing heads and flukes in the surf and spouting high in the air. Of course, there was a little flurry. We hurried together our 'scratch' crew—there was but one whaler in the lot except Coffin and me—and put to sea without a compass on board or a bite of anything to eat.

Soon we drew up to a sixty-barrel whale and Coffin buried his iron deep. At once the brute shot forward like a rocket, towing the boat so swiftly that the water rose up on either side of her like a wall.

"These spurts would last perhaps for half a mile, when he would stop and sulk awhile, then start off again. These stops we improved by getting nearer to him in order to use the lance.

"I was now in the bow, with my lance poised, having exchanged with Coffin as soon as he struck. It takes skill and caution as well as nerve to approach a whale in this condition. If you get directly in his wake, he knows it by some means, we cannot tell how, and sounds at once. You must come up quartering to get within lancing distance. By and by we were so near that I thought it best to strike, though the boat was not where an experienced crew would have put her.

"As I struck the men backed water so quickly that the lance was left in the wound. It stayed there an hour and a half before the old fellow was quiet enough so that I could strike again. The last blow touched his life; he spouted blood in torrents, stood up on his head and shrieked, and lashed the sea till foam and spray deluged us from stem to stern. Then, off he went, heading seaward.

"We followed for hours, expecting the death flurry every minute, but, by and by, with night coming on, we were forced to cut the line and let him go. We were in a nice position then, twenty miles from land, in our one open boat; fog so thick you could cut it; darkness only a few hours distant; with nothing to eat, and faint from having eaten nothing since morning. We discovered, too, that we had no compass, and the only way we could tell where the land lay was by the surges rolling in. We followed them, and at 7:30 p. m. landed at Muskeget, close by the life saving station, where we spent the night.

"Last Saturday morning, four days later, we raised another school of whales, and put out better equipped and with a better crew, struck a whale, and fifteen minutes later he was lying dead on the bottom in 11 fathoms of water. We marked it by tying a buoy to the harpoon line with a red flag upon it, and secured it with an anchor attached to the same, then took our bearings and rowed in. A right whale rises to the surface when his gall-sac bursts, which occurs in from 48 to 72 hours. Ours was killed Saturday morning, so he ought to come to the surface some time today.

"Odd about whales sinking," said Capt. Jernegan. "I've known whales to sink that never rose. A whale that sounds in two hundred fathoms is apt to stay down. I remember once on the coast of Chili, we lost nine whales in three days that way. Estimating a whale at 80 barrels, we sunk on that coast 2200 barrels for the 200 we stowed in the hold. Four thousand fathoms of good rope and our irons went, too."

By this time the *Vesta* was off Madaket harbor, taking short tacks in the narrow, intricate channel that winds among the shoals in that part of Nantucket Sound. She was only a light pleasure craft, but she required a skillful pilot to take her among the shoals, some of which were bare at low water, though miles from shore.

From this point, we looked out over the "rip" (the narrow channel separating Tuckernuck from the western end of Nantucket) into the open Atlantic. There was a thundering surf pounding on the bar and covering it with foam. A sailboat came speeding down the passage, doubling and twisting with the channel, its white wings sparkling in the sun.

Mate Coffin seized the glass: "I believe it's Uncle Dunham," said he, "and he acts as though he wanted to speak to us."

Sure enough, when the boat came up, its master, a tall, spare man, leaned over the gunwale and shouted through his hands: "Whale up at six o'clock this morning; dragged anchor and drifted in two miles; lies just inside the rip."

"Who's watching him?" shouted Coffin in reply.

"The whaleboat's out there," was the answer, and the little boat drew away towards Tuckernuck, leading us, and coming to anchor near the beach with us about three o'clock.

The men did not go out after the whale immediately, waiting for the tide to set from the eastward, that is from the sea, when it would help float the leviathan in, so they had plenty of time to unload the *Vesta's* cargo, the shallow water not allowing her to come close inshore.

They unloaded in a novel manner. The casks were thrown overboard, with a turn of rope around each, and then towed ashore, while the try-pot was fastened to the stern of a dory, hollow side up, and made to ride the waves ashore, like a duck. At four, the daily mystery of the tide begins.

Then the boat goes out. The long oars rise and fall in a way that would charm a college crew. This is no boy's play, however. They head directly into the surf, rise and fall a few times with the breakers, and then rise easily on the long swell of the Atlantic. We see them join the other boat, which has been watching the prize, then both set their sails and begin towing it in.

All went well until they reached the bar. There the huge beast went aground, and the rear boat cut their line to escape being swamped. Then both boats dashed inside to the beach, the men running along the sand-hills to watch the whale. The rising tide carried it over the bar in twenty minutes, but before they could get into the boats and make fast to it, the current had whirled it down nearly to Madaket Harbor; but from there it was easy to tow it across and beach it on the south side of Tuckernuck.

A stout line fastened to the whale's flukes and then carried around a fish-house on the shore, secured the catch. When this was done the men trudged to their homes. The visitor walked a mile over level sheep pastures to the house of Farmer Brooks, where he found a good supper and a clean bed with the unwonted luxury of woolen sheets awaiting him.

Three o'clock next morning had been set aside as the hour of meeting to cut up the whale, but when the visitor reached the scene at five the men were only beginning to arrive. Captain Clisby called the whale one of the "35-barrel kind," a small specimen compared to the 100-barrel kind, as is sometimes caught, but it seemed a monster to the visitor.

It was some forty feet long, and as it lay on its side, fully six feet above the water, the latter being five feet deep, the fin or flipper upright proved to be as long as a man was tall.

The captain began operations by cutting with the spade a deep incision in the neck just forward of the fin, and continuing until he reached and unjointed the huge vertebrae as neatly as a surgeon could have done it.

Then the lip of the head was taken off, exposing the upright row of whalebone lining the cavity of the mouth, with its hairy filaments, used by the whale in straining from the water the minute sea animals, called by the men "brit," on which he feeds.

Meantime, half-a-dozen men, under Mate Coffin, using the whaleboats as a staging, had attacked the body, cutting through the black, shiny skin and peeling off the blubber—which was about ten inches thick—in large square pieces. These were fastened together and towed ashore in readiness for the try-pot, which was set on an improvised fireplace of brick. The men worked busily, intending to strip the upper half of the whale that tide, and then at the next turn strip the other side.

When the head and all the blubber that could be obtained had been taken off, the process of "trying-out" began. The scraps were used as fuel, and continued till the last piece disappeared in the try-pot.

"What's she worth?" the visitor inquired of Captain Clisby.

"Well," said he, "there's six hundred pounds of bone, worth from 2 to 3 cents a pound, and the thirty-five barrels of oil—well, say from sixteen to eighteen hundred dollars as she lies."

Feb 11 1936



## Nantucket Did Shore Whaling But New Bedford Did None.

New Bedford did no shore whaling, which was a type of whaling done close to shore, along which were located lookout masts and other convenient observation posts on hills, sand dunes or accessible trees.

Upon sighting a whale or whales, signals were made or called by voice for the assembly of crews and launching of boats in pursuit.

After capture the whale had to be towed by the boat or boats to the beach, where were located the try-works. In many cases the carcass had to be beached wherever possible, after which the blubber had to be carted or rafted to the tryworks, where the boiling out of the oil was done and then barrelled and stored.

The annals of this earliest phase of the colonial period whaling, credit the eastern end of Long Island with establishing a patrol on the beach of the south, or ocean, side as early as 1644, for the salvage or drift whales cast ashore and a few years later the capture of live whales was pursued as a winter industry, the season being from November to April.

Massachusetts and Cape Cod Bay communities were also engaged in this type of whaling and there is a record of the appointment of whale-cutters on Martha's Vineyard even before the settlement of Nantucket, whose first whale was captured about 1670 by the use of hastily made implements.

The whales abundant in the waters of the Atlantic coast of commercial value were the Biscay specie of right whale and also the humpback. As technique improved there were fewer drift whales and as the active pursuit depleted the whales in their migrations it became necessary to make short cruises out of sight of land, usually for some days, and this cruising period lengthened when the whalers began to go into northern waters—the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Baffin Bay, and adjacent inlets of the Arctic west of Greenland.

All of these whaling grounds were well known and had been whaled by the several maritime nations of Europe, but this was still right, or Greenland, whaling; the products being whale oil or train oil and whale fins or the whalebone (baleen).

Sperm whaling is an industry credited to Nantucket, from about 1712, when Capt. Christopher Hussey killed the first sperm whale and towed it laboriously to shore for the trying out processes.

Prior to this capture, a dead sperm whale had been found on a Nantucket beach and the superior quality of its oil was well-known and extolled for medicinal use as well as for an illuminant.

The early off-shore cruises for whales were made in small sloops carrying, or towing, one boat and often these little vessels worked in pairs as most safe and effective in early completion of a successful voyage.

These vessels cut in the whale at sea and the blubber was stored in open containers aboard for the return to port and tried out ashore.

In 1652, the leading men of Plymouth Colony bought of the Indians the land west of that colony, to the bounds of what is now Rhode Island. This area had a shore frontage on Buzzard's Bay and beyond, on the Atlantic, for a shorter distance.

Scattered hamlets developed along water courses and salt water inlets of this district known as Old Dartmouth. About 1750 one of these little hamlets became known as Bedford, and the Russells, its leading family, began whaling, outfitting small sloops which, when successful, brought back the whales blubber to the try-works on shore as was common in the Massachusetts Colony at this period.

As previously mentioned, there was no shore whaling done by Bedford village which in later years was New Bedford. Several factors prove this: Bedford Village was located many miles from the open ocean and the coastwise route of the whales, which travel was south of Long Island and Nantucket, in this vicinity.

The hamlet of Bedford was not established until after the passing of general shore-whaling and during the period when short off-shore voyages were yet being made, and the blubber on the sloop's return boiled out at the try-works ashore.

A great impetus was given this feeble beginning of Bedford's whaling when Joseph Rotch came from Nantucket. Because of his superior knowledge and skill in conducting the whaling business, his wealth was vital to Bedford's progress.

Throughout this period and until after the second decade of the 19th century the whaling history of both Nantucket and New Bedford is that of the interlocking business acumen of the Rotch family, and a continued building and operation of a larger and better equipped whalerships, necessitated by the longer voyages to even more distant whaling grounds.

Following the Revolutionary War, the restrictive English maritime laws were abolished and the deep sea whaling vessels were square-rigged brigs and ships. Nantucket had but few schooners or barks engaged in whaling. The bark rig did not become popular at New Bedford until mid-19th century.

—Wilbur G. Sherman.  
New Bedford, Mass.

June 13, 1936

In the work of laying new and larger water mains on Water street and down the Old North wharf, workmen discovered a section of cobble stone pavement about one foot below the present surface of the street. It was doubtless laid to facilitate the trucking of oil when that commodity was the principal article carted up and down the wharf.

Apr. 14, 1906

## Nantucket Whaling in the Past.

In the year of 1886, which was several years after the whaling industry of Nantucket had ceased, a few inhabitants of Tuckernuck sighted, one day in May, a large school of right whales about one mile south of that island. Knowing the value of their bone (at that time) they decided to come to the town of Nantucket and interview Mr. Joseph Macy, who kept a supply store on Straight wharf.

Mr. Macy in his earlier days was in the whaling industry. Therefore, it was their good fortune to equip themselves with the necessary articles used in capturing whales. They secured from Mr. Macy a whaleboat, harpoons, lances, towlines, and other equipment.

They started for the island of Tuckernuck and arrived there at sundown, but were too late to start that day. The next morning they left at break of day. They launched their boats and rowed out through Smith's Point opening, reaching the whaling ground at sunrise. After cruising around for about an hour, Capt. Timothy Clisby, in charge of the boat, called to Mr. George Coffin, in the bow: "I believe I see something on our left which might possibly be a whale submerged."

"Sure enough", cried Mr. Coffin. Capt. Clisby headed the boat in that direction and cautioned his crew not to make any more noise with their oars than they possibly could help.

"Now pull ahead easy, boys", cautioned the Captain. Within a short time they were quite handy to the whale. "Be ready now, Mr. Coffin", said Captain Clisby.

Mr. Coffin stood up with a harpoon in his hand. By this time the bow of the boat touched the side of the whale. Mr. Coffin braced himself and with all his strength plunged the harpoon deep into the whale's body. Instantly he grasped another harpoon and plunged that into the whale. At the same time he ordered the men with the oars to back water, which was done none too quickly.

The big whale submerged head-first to the bottom of the ocean, throwing his big flukes out of the water. Mr. Coffin then left his place in the bow and took the Captain's position. By this time, the whale was getting under way. The towline which was fastened to the harpoon in the whale was running at a terrific speed through the chocks in the bow.

This line was coiled in a big tub in the after-part of the boat, with a turn around the loggerhead. Every once in a while they would check the speed of the line, taking an extra turn around it. By tending the line very carefully, they were able to obtain control of the boat.

The whale was now carrying them at a terrific rate of speed. It was not long before they were several miles off shore, then the towline slackened.

They knew then that the whale was getting ready to come to the surface. Soon the big whale jumped half its length out of water, and thrashed it with his big fluke. It wasn't until the whale had quieted that the Captain said, "Now is our time, boys, pull ahead." Captain Clisby stood up with his big lance and when he was near enough, plunged the lance into the whale's heart.

"Back water, boys", cried the Captain.

The big whale submerged again but only for a short time. He came to the surface and began spouting blood. The big whale turned over on his side and went through many flurries and died. They towed the whale in on the east side of Tuckernuck. Then they built try works and cut the whale up. This yielded many barrels of oil and a great deal of valuable bone.

Whales have been sighted several times since and several unsuccessful attempts have been made to capture them.

—Marriott Fisher.

[Editor's Note: The author wrote this when she was in the seventh grade.]

March 16, 1934

## Old Whaling Glories.

From the Springfield Republican.

An article in the files of The Republican of 100 years ago gives a contemporary view of that period when New England's whaling ships traversed the oceans of the world, manned by a hardy and adventurous Yankee breed. It was then estimated that 10,000 sailors were aboard the 392 whaling craft, nearly all from New England ports, then roamed the seas. But in 1833, the whaling industry had by no means reached its peak, which did not come until 20 years later. The number of craft engaged had then almost doubled.

In 1833, according to an article reprinted from the "N. A. Review", New Bedford was the greatest of all whaling ports and it remained until the industry died. From that port 184 whalerships were afloat. Nantucket was second with 93 ships, Edgartown, Falmouth and Fall River together had 12, New London, 37; Sag Harbor, 24; Bristol, Warren and Newport, R. I., 31; New York, Hudson, Poughkeepsie and Newburg, 21, and ports north of Cape Cod, Plymouth, Salem, Newburyport and Portsmouth, 10.

When in the eighteen-fifties the decline of the whaling industry began for many causes, including the increasing production of mineral oils, many of the famous old ports lost their distinction. By 1876 there were reported only 169 whaling craft in the business and of these 116 ships, barks, brigs and schooners, belonging to New Bedford. Nantucket had disappeared entirely from the whaling map, and so almost had New London.

Jan. 27, 1934

## SAILMAKING

IN ALL ITS PARTS.

I AM prepared to make sails from a dory to a line-of-battle ship; also Awnings, Swinging Cots, Hammocks, Clothes-bags, Tents, Canopies, Tarpaulins, Screens, Window Awnings, sewing and fitting carpets, covering steam pipes, and furnishing Canvas, Rope, and everything belonging to the trade of Sailmaking. Respectfully,

D. C. BRAYTON.  
121 St. Residence, Darling Street.

1892



**Capt. Coffin and Marcus Dunham  
Only Survivors of Whale Chase.**

Fifty-one years ago last April the island of Tuckernuck was the headquarters for the last whaling company to engage in the business out of Nantucket. Of that group, numbering two score of husky islanders, only two are now living, Capt. Everett Coffin, of Seattle, Washington, and Marcus W. Dunham of Nantucket.

Capt. Coffin, home for a visit after an absence of nearly fifty years, recalls well the incidents of the last whale chase around these shores, and Mr. Dunham, whose memory is still keen despite his 80 years of active living, also remembers the details that occurred during the whaling at home.

Early in April, 1886, Capt. Timothy Clisby, master of the whaling schooner *Era* of New London, was informed by his mate, George "Eddie" Coffin, of Tuckernuck, that a school of right whales had been sighted twice off the "opening" between Smith's Point and the island.

Capt. Clisby went up to Tuckernuck with mate Coffin. Some gear was on the island and there were also a number of whaleboats. During the next few days a sharp look-out was kept for the whales, with a boat's-crew on hand ready to launch at a moment's notice.

On the 13th day of April, 1886, the school was again sighted, some distance off the northwest side of the island. The boat was immediately put into the water. Mate Coffin, as boat-steerer, was in the bow with his harpoon, while Capt. Clisby had the big steering oar in the stern. The crew consisted of George B. Coffin, 72 years old, Edward Dunham, Elbert Dunham, Arthur P. Dunham, Charles Eldridge, and George Fisher.

Under Capt. Clisby's direction they came up to the school, picked out the first likely-looking whale, and Mate Coffin sunk his harpoon to the hitches. They had fastened to a 60-barrel bull. The time was 7:30 o'clock in the morning.

Then began a wild tow, with the whale hauling the boat at a fierce rate out to sea. Luckily, he did not sound for they had very little line to let out, but after a three-hour tow, and being unable to get within lancing distance of the huge beast, they were forced to cut. A drag was put over, bearing the name of "J. B. Macy."

A thick fog had come in, but the Tuckernuckers, using the swell as a guide as well as the compass, started on a five-hour pull towards land. At 7:00 o'clock that night they sighted the fog-enshrouded island of Muskeget and landed.

The next day the school was again sighted. This time the chase had better luck, a whale being struck and finally killed, although he was a small one and almost immediately sank.

During the night Capt. Clisby proposed going to town for try-pots and gear. A buoy had been put on the line over the sunken whale, as it was a common thing for the creatures to float again after being immersed for 48 hours. The whaleboat then started for town.

Captain Coffin entered the story at this point. He was one of those who had gathered in "Rube" McCleave's shop when the word came that the whaleboat had rounded the point. The group went down to Still Dock and awaited the arrival. The news that a whale had been taken, and that the school still sported about off Smith's Point opening created quite a bit of excitement.

Securing about 300 feet of whale-line, two harpoons, some lances, casks, and an iron try-pot with a capacity for 180 gals., Capt. Clisby chartered the large catboat *Vesta*, Capt. Jerne-gan, to take the gear to Tuckernuck. He also sent to New Bedford for additional gear from John McCullough, outfitter.

"A few more hands were needed to man another boat," said Captain Everett Coffin, "so Joe P. Gardner, Amos Hamilton and myself were accepted as volunteers. We went up on the *Vesta*, with Capt. Jerne-gan and his mate, Capt. Horace Cash, swapping whaling yarns all the way up to Tuckernuck. When we reached the harbor side of the island, there was old George B. Coffin on the beach waving his hands and shouting: 'Whale up! Whale up!' The sunken whale had come up that morning."

The casks were thrown overboard and allowed to drift to the beach, the try-pot was made fast to the stern of a dory and towed ashore floating. The *Vesta* then put about for town, with the promise to return with the gear which was to be shipped from New Bedford.

The attention of the two whaleboats was then directed to the whale. The "spare boat" had been off watching the drifting whale and hooked on with the others in the effort to tow him to the beach. But the tide was not yet at the full and the whale grounded on the bar near the "opening," the boats being forced to cut to escape swamping.

But as the tide came up the whale floated again and was then towed to the beach, where the receding waters left him fast aground in five feet of water. Even then he was some six feet out of water.

With Capt. Clisby and Mate Coffin showing the way, the creature was "cut in" and the blubber removed. The first task was the removal of the head, accomplished with crude but efficient surgery by Capt. Clisby, who neatly cut through the blubber and meat and disjointed the vertebrae. The thick, wide lip of the whale's curious mouth was cut off, disclosing the long, upright rows of whalebone that lined the mouth and its attendant hairy filament, used to strain the food sucked in with the water.

Using the whaleboats as temporary stagings the crews cut the blubber into wide strips and peeled it off the whale under Mate Coffin's direction. Over 700 pounds of bone and nearly 45 barrels of oil were taken, yielding a profit approximating \$2,000.

"Well, sir," remarked Capt. Coffin, "you can imagine how pleased we all were. We hung around on Tuckernuck the next few days, talking and sleeping nothing but whales. Of course, we had some look-outs on deck all the time hoping that the critters would put in an appearance again. Three days later we were rewarded, when 'Uncle' Dunham came bursting into the house with news that whales were off the opening again.

"Thar-r-r bloo-o-ows!" rang out at once from the other look-out. We were in the boats before you could say 'Dilly-dally'—and off we went after them."

In the boat were Capt. Clisby at the steering oar, Mate George "Eddie" Coffin in the bow as boatsteerer, Joe P. Gardner, bow oar, Marcus Dunham mid-ship oar, Arthur Dunham, tub oar, and Everett Coffin, stroke oar.

The school was one of the largest Capt. Clisby had ever seen. With a dexterity born of long practice he guided his boat right into the midst of the school, and then bade Mate Coffin to "pick out a big one."

It was a picture typically in the tradition of Nantucket whaling—the frail whaleboat threading its way into the maelstrom of white water churned by the flukes of the sea's greatest creatures. And each of the experienced oarsmen had the same thought in mind—to pick out the largest of these monster sea-beasts to capture.

And that's exactly what they did, but in a strange fashion. Mate Coffin put a savagely swift, thrusting harpoon into the large bull. In a flash he was off, giving them a real "Nantucket sleigh ride". He went to the west and then north in a circle. During the long interim, Mate Coffin and Capt. Clisby changed places. Twice the boat got close enough to allow Capt. Clisby to lance, and as many times the deadly weapon failed to reach a vital spot.

On the next attempt, the anxious skipper did a daring thing. In a last effort to get in the fatal stroke, he "straddled the line" in the bow and leaned forward for extra leverage. It came near to being a tragedy. With a flip of his tremendous flukes the whale snapped the line and boat around as a boy swings a top. Capt. Clisby was thrown high in the air and fell into the sea some distance away.

But Mate Coffin was equal to the occasion. A quick command and the men bent at the oars; a skillful twist of the steering oar and the boat was alongside the struggling man; another sharp turn, and the dripping skipper was safe in the boat—and the line was still fast to the fish. It was a remarkable example of boat-handling.

Capt. Coffin told the rest with a twinkle in his eye: "The next time we came up alongside that feller, before Clisby had chance to get at his irons, Marcus Dunham grabbed up a lance, balanced himself on the mid-ship thwart and then jumped on that whale's back. Whew! I can see him now leaning over as he jabbed that lance deep into the vitals of the whale. All the while, Mate Coffin was hollering, 'For God's sake get off that whale! Do you want to get us all killed?'"

"Then Marcus jumped back and we pulled astern as quickly as the Lord would let us. In the next second the critter began to spout blood. Marcus had done the trick. Another hour and the whale was lying at the bottom—but in shoal water—off Muskeget. By this time we were tuckered out."

"Naturally, we declared that Marcus had certainly shown us quite a stunt," said Captain Coffin. "Both Capt. Clisby and Mate Coffin, who had been right whaling in the *Era* up in Hudson Bay and Greenland waters, remarked that they had never seen it attempted before, and they doubted whether any man would ever be

able to do it again. Marcus was as quick as a cat in those days—and he's pretty spry now, despite his 80 years."

The gear for trying-out had arrived from New Bedford, as well as another whaleboat and some more lines and tubs, together with harpoons, lances, blubber-spades, mincing knives, etc. Capt. Clisby had not been idle in other ways. He had sent James Ramsdell to New London to bring down the chartered schooner *Sis Church*. When she arrived another whale had been taken, and she assisted in cutting-in operations. Due to the large sizes of the right whales, the little schooner was considerably "hull down" during these phases of the work, the weight of the blubber strips nearly careening the craft. The blubber was brought to the beach and there tried out.

Capt. Coffin stated that the three boat-crews gathered in an harvest of nearly \$6,000 that month, but that it was as suddenly ended as it had begun. The schooner was taken well off shore on cruises, but no more whales were sighted.

"Soon after that," said Capt. Coffin, "I went up to New London with the others and signed on the whaling schooner *Era*, for a cruise around the shoals for whales. We didn't know it at the time, but we were really bound for the Arctic. However, nothing ever came of it, for the craft was wrecked on the coast of Rhode Island during a thick snow storm ten days after we put to sea. That ended my whaling career."

Thus ended the last whale chase out of Nantucket. It proved that the spirit of the old whaling days still lived—that when the occasion demanded the islanders were ready to once more dart the long harpoon and wield the sharp lance. Fifty years later, two members of a boat-crew are still "on deck"—Capt. Everett Coffin and Marcus Dunham—and both are still spry enough to take part in another whale-chase, if need be.

Oct. 23, 1937



## The Last Whales Brought into Nantucket

The memory of mankind is fickle. The other day, when we endeavored to determine when the last whale was brought into Nantucket, we thought there would be many of our townspeople who could readily recall the year and the name of the vessel which towed the whale in; but, although there were many who could recall the event—it happened over forty years ago—not one person could divulge the information desired. The files of *The Inquirer and Mirror*, however, brought forth the facts, and we learned that on two occasions in the early 70's whales were brought into Nantucket harbor and their blubber tried out for oil. The exact dates were April 1, 1870, and October 17, 1871, and the stories of the events can best be told as they were told by the local press at that time, as follows:

*The Inquirer and Mirror, April 2, 1870.*

Dropping in at the Union News Room, yesterday morning, we were startled by an article on the slate, written in an imperative mode, like the "general orders" which are painted up all along our railroad tracks, "Use Dr. Brown's Pills!" and "Buy your clothing at Smith's!" The words were in this case "Go down to the wharf and see the whale!"

With the almanac before us, it became us to move cautiously, for we are exceedingly sensitive about being April-Fooled. But we soon found our caution was superfluous, and we islanders have a sort of instinct which tells us when whales are really in sight. We found the schooner T. & C. Hawes of Chatham moored off the "Old North," with a whale of the finback species alongside, which had been picked up dead, near Chatham. Though we were not sold, the whale soon was; our enterprising friend, J. B. Macy, being, as usual, on hand for a trade. Leviathan was hauled alongside the Commercial Wharf, where he is being handled by those who understand their business and will doubtless do their duty well under trying circumstances, as they have in days of yore. We have not yet ascertained in what manner the monster met his death.

*The Inquirer and Mirror, April 9, 1870.*

Commercial Wharf was the most fashionable promenade in town during Friday of last week, when everybody and his wife and children went down to get a view of the whale and witness the operation of "cutting in." But time had exerted its mellowing influence and the odor omitted was not exactly of Arabia Felix. Our neighbor Freeman was on the spot, and succeeded in getting some very fine views of the scene, which may be examined at his rooms, and copies purchased by such as may desire them.

The whale measured 63 feet in length, and yielded about 22 barrels of oil. Post-mortem examinations have failed to develop anything new as to the cause of his death, which remains a mystery.

*The Inquirer and Mirror, October 21, 1871.*

If our day of chasing whales is gone by, we have only to stay quietly at home and let them come to us. One drifted ashore near Siasconset on Monday morning last, in an advanced stage of "mellowness," and was first discovered by Mr. James T. Worth. On Tuesday morning another was brought to the bar by a fishing smack, which had picked him up in the vicinity of Tuckernuck Shoals. A survey having been held, which pronounced the blubber worth trying out, the prize was taken in tow by Capt. Alex. B. Dunham, and was secured at the Straight Wharf on Tuesday noon. Cutting gear was got up on board schooner Abby Bradford, and operations were commenced at once, under the superintendence of Capt. Obed Swain. The carcass, after having been stripped of the blubber, was sold at auction on Wednesday, for five dollars. The blubber was carried to the try-works of Mr. Amaziah Fsher, on South Wharf, where it was boiled out, yielding some twenty-five barrels of oil.

Some blubber was taken from the whale at Siasconset, and a few gallons of oil obtained; also a small quantity (two or three pounds) of a substance believed to be ambergris, not fully matured, which has been sent to those skilled in such matters, to be examined and tested.

Nothing is known of the cause of death of either of these whales; but it is a remarkable circumstance that two of them should have appeared simultaneously. The operation of "cutting in" at the Straight Wharf excited great interest among our people, and crowds witnessed it, though the odor wafted to them was not exactly a spicy breeze from Arabia Felix.

DECEMBER 14, 1912

## When Nantucket Petitioned For Expedition to Pacific.

The New Bedford Mercury, in its "one hundred years ago" column, has the following item from the issue of February, 1828:

A memorial to Congress has been forwarded from Nantucket praying that an expedition may be fitted out for the purpose of exploring certain parts of the Pacific Ocean, most frequented by whalers, where, from the imperfect guides now afforded to the navigator, frequent and serious perils are unavoidable. Many of the seas and coast visited by our Pacific Whalers are but little known, and but partially explored—abounding with reefs and islands, either heretofore undiscovered or so erroneously laid down on existing charts as to tend rather to mislead than to aid the mariner. A successful expedition of the character proposed, by furnishing sure and correct guides to future navigators would not only benefit the whaling interest, but prove highly creditable in a national point of view; and with the abundant naval means at the command of the government, we should hope there would exist no reluctance to its being undertaken.

We understand that a petition embracing the same object as that from Nantucket, will be forwarded from this town.

## There She Blows!



Thursday morning, as Dr. Harrison Allen, of Philadelphia, a summer resident at Sconset, was meandering along the beach, he discovered a huge fish in the surf, directly off his cottage on Sunset Heights, which proved to be a calf sperm whale. "The 'fish' was dead, and Dr. Allen called assistance and had it secured by fastening a rope about the fluke and to a piece of wreckage on the beach. It was late in the forenoon before the fact became generally known, when there was a stampede of cottagers to the scene, who viewed the remains as they were tossed about in the undertow. In Nantucket the news was circulated by crier, and quite a delegation took the late afternoon train out to secure a glimpse.

The railroad officials made terms with Dr. Allen to secure the animal for exhibition, the doctor stipulating that he should eventually have the skeleton. Accordingly, after the arrival of the evening train, a force of railroad employees went to the beach armed with "gear," and with the assistance of bystanders, the huge body was parbuckled up the sands to a point of safety, where it reposed in state.

It was a weird sight that was presented the onlookers, as the workmen flitted about the surf, struggling with the mass of blubber amid the flickering lights of a bonfire and hand lanterns.

A canvas was set up about the spot, and during Friday hundreds of people from Nantucket went over to satisfy their curiosity.

The whale, as above stated, is a calf sperm, about fifteen feet in length, and but a very few months old, as estimated by old whalers, the teeth being just about to break through the gums. It had been dead presumably but a very short time, and was in an almost perfect state of preservation.

## Crew at Prayer For Record Catch of Whales.

Thankful because a kind Providence made it possible for them to catch 2400 whales which produced 200,000 barrels of whale oil, 356 sturdy Norwegians and Swedes comprising the crew of the Norwegian whaling vessel Kosmos knelt in prayer on board that craft last Sunday.

Rev. E. N. Ravnan, pastor of the Norwegian Seamen's church at Norfolk, Va., offered the prayer. It was the first time in history, so far as could be learned, that such a service was held on board a whaling vessel.

The Kosmos arrived at Norfolk Friday to discharge 60,000 barrels of her huge cargo, which weighs more than 20,000 tons. The remainder is to be taken to Sanderjord, Norway, and put in storage until there is a market demand for it.

The crew of the Kosmos, as a result of the huge whale oil cargo, will receive a small fortune for the six months they spent in the Ross Sea killing whales. The Kosmos is equipped with machinery and other apparatus for dissecting whale carcasses and boiling the oil from the flesh. She is the largest vessel of her type in the world, having a dead weight tonnage of 22,300. Her skipper is Capt. Hans Andressen, who will receive \$5000 in prize money. Nine gunners who killed the whales will receive an average of \$10,000 each. The cargo is valued at more than \$3,000,000.

March 2, 1928

May 16, 1931



WHALING EXTRAORDINARY.—If our day of chasing whales is gone by, we have only to stay quietly at home and let them come to us. One drifted ashore near Siasconset on Monday morning last, in an advanced stage of "mellowness," and was first discovered by Mr. James T. Worth. On Tuesday morning, another was brought to the Bar by a fishing-smack, which had picked him up in the vicinity of Tuckernuck shoals. A survey having been held, which pronounced the blubber worth trying out, the prize was taken in tow by Capt. Alexander B. Dunham, and was secured at the Straight Wharf on Tuesday noon. Cutting gear was got up on board schooner Abby Bradford, and operations were commenced at once, under the superintendence of Capt. Obed Swain. The carcass, after having been stripped of the blubber, was sold at auction on Wednesday, for five dollars. The blubber was carried to the try-works of Mr. Amaziah Fisher, on South Wharf, where it was boiled out, yielding twenty five barrels of oil.

Some blubber was taken from the whale at Siasconset, and a few gallons of oil obtained; also a small quantity (two or three pounds) of a substance believed to be ambergris, not fully matured, which has been sent to those skilled in such matters, to be examined and tested.

Nothing is known of the cause of death of either of these whales; but it is a remarkable circumstance that two of them should have appeared simultaneously. The operation of "cutting in" at the Straight Wharf, excited great interest among our people, and crowds witnessed it, though the odor wafted to them was not exactly a spicy breeze from Arabia Felix.

#### Cut a Whale in Halves.

The Anchor line steamship Ethiopia sliced a whale in two with her steel prow on Saturday morning last on her voyage from Glasgow to New York. Second Officer Fife thin's the whale was a rorqual or razor back. He doesn't like to say how big it was, but is inclined to think that ninety feet would measure its length.

Many of the Ethiopia's passengers had a momentary glimpse of the whale. The sun showed brilliantly from a cloudless sky, and the sea was placid. Nearly everybody was on deck. At 10.45 o'clock a big bubbling was observed about 200 feet ahead. A huge shining dark body appeared in the middle of the bubbling and a fountain of water spouted skyward.

Second Officer Fife thought that the whale would have sense enough to get out of the way. Maybe it thought the Ethiopia was another marine monster and wanted to have a little fun with her. Before Mr. Fife could give the signal to stop and reverse, the stem of the Ethiopia had struck the whale amidships. The vessel vibrated as if she had hit a piece of sunken wreck. The engineer thought the machinery had broken and fallen through the hull. Passengers who ran to the sides and looked over the rails saw the divided whale floating past, its blood giving a red tinge to the Ethiopia's foamy track.

## The Nantucket Inquirer.

MONDAY, MAY 25, 1857.

### Home Whaling.

On Friday afternoon two whales were seen off the South Side of the Island. Our whalers with their usual energy, immediately prepared boats and carried them to the South Shore, in order to be in readiness to "give chase" to the Leviathan on Saturday morning. Accordingly on the following morning the whales being still in sight, two boats were launched, and after a short "pull" one whale was captured by a boat under command of Capt. Joseph Winslow, and towed to the shore by four boats. He was of the "Scrags" species, and will probably make about thirty barrels of oil. A large number of people were gathered upon the beach to witness the exciting work of capturing him, and every thing in the shape of a horse was employed in the afternoon to convey the multitudes to get a glimpse of the monster.

On Sunday morning the whale was hauled upon the beach, with a heavy purchase, high enough to enable the "whalers" to cut him up, and he was soon divested of his valuable coating, which will be brought to town for try-al.

Another whale was in sight off Siasconset on Saturday, and was seen again off the South side yesterday. If he values his life as we do his "jacket," he had better not come "blowing" round here, for the "b'hoys" are "on the lookout" for "white water" now.

All honor to the brave tars who pursued and captured this fish; and may they always meet with like success in their future whaling operations.

## The Nantucket Inquirer.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 1857.

THAT WHALE was cut up on Sunday, and on Monday the work of "trying out" was commenced at the oil works of Messrs. C. G. & H. Coffin. The blubber ranged from four to six inches in thickness and was very fat. It is expected to yield about thirty barrels of oil, worth at last quotations 73 cts per gallon. In our statement of the capture of this fish we should have said that it was captured by two boats, one under command of Capt. Joseph Winslow the other commanded by Capt. Benj. Morton.

On visiting the above oil works for the purpose of witnessing the operations of "trying out" we heard an elderly gentleman remark that he "felt carried back twenty years by the healthy smell," and it recalled the times when such a "smell" came from every portion of our town.

Would that such a truly "healthful smell" might for centuries to come be constantly arising from our midst, for with such fountains of "health," wealth and happiness would soon flow in unrestrained upon our people. Oh! that times "were as they used to was."

SHORE WHALING.—On Friday, of last week, two right whales of the "Scrags" species, which had been playing round the Vineyard for a number of days, leading the boats of our neighbors on many a wild goose chase, and finally giving them the slip entirely, took occasion to "beard the lion in his den," and appeared off the South side of our island about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Two boats were immediately furnished and fitted by Mr. Joseph B. Macy, and carried to the shore that night, to be in readiness should the whales make their appearance the following day. One of the boats was headed by Capt. Joseph H. Winslow, with a crew consisting of Francis Folger, Charles C. Bunker, George Parlow, Frederick G. Coffin, and Joseph M. Chase; the other headed by Capt. Benjamin S. Morton, with William Atwood, Leander F. Alley, Hiram Swain, Henry C. Russell and William C. Marden for a crew. Early on Saturday morning they started off, and came up with one of them about 8 o'clock. An iron was thrown into his broadside by Mr. Francis Folger, when he sounded, and on coming up, two more were firmly planted by William Atwood, from the other boat, which so astonished his whaleship that he brought to, and after a well fought action on his part of about half an hour, he gave up, covered with lance wounds, and was towed to the shore near the boat houses at Weeweder. The other whale, immediately on this one being struck, made the best use of his flukes and fins, and passed Sconset in the afternoon, and was pursued by a couple of boats, but to no purpose.

As soon as the news of the capture reached town, every horse and carriage was put in requisition, and the road leading to the shore was soon alive with carriages and pedestrians.—Taking our staff in hand, we were soon on the road, which presented an appearance not seen since the palmy days of Sheep Shearing; and on reaching the shore, we found a large crowd looking at the dead body of the animal, which then laid just in the wash, rolling forward and back by the action of the surf. It was, as near as we could judge, about thirty feet in length, by about six in diameter at the largest part. The flukes were about ten feet across from tip to tip, and though a small whale, he appeared very fat, and likely to yield well.

The next morning he was rolled up the beach by the aid of powerful purchases, and the fleecing operation commenced, and was completed about four o'clock in the afternoon, when nothing remained but the huge carcass, divested of everything of value. The blubber was carted to town, tried out at the works of C. G. & H. Coffin, and yielded twenty-four and a half barrels of oil.

Although two or three dead whales have been driven upon the beach since our recollection, this is the first one that has been taken by boats, and carried us in imagination back to old primitive times, when our ancestors commenced the business of whaling from the shores; from which small beginning they went on increasing, and extending their voyage until their sails whitened every sea, and not a whale could raise his "barnacled crest" above the surface of the water in any part of the world, without finding a Nantucket boy, with stout heart and sinewy arm, standing in the bows of a whale boat, brandishing a harpoon directly over him; and the fame of our seamen, as navigators, became world-wide.

### Captured at Last.

The whale which has appeared periodically off Hull, Nahant and elsewhere in Boston bay the past few months, an account of which appeared in the JOURNAL of February 7th, has at last been captured. He is said to be a right whale, about 75 feet in length and is evidently an old settler. He was captured off Nahant Saturday by a crew of experienced men made up in Nahant for the purpose. The whale had been reported by several parties during the past few weeks, and Friday night two fishermen who were out in their boat were forced to make a hurried retreat to the shore in order to escape undue familiarity on the part of his whaleship.

Saturday's whaling party sighted the monster about a quarter of a mile off shore, and, proceeding cautiously were able to get near enough to strike him just behind the head with a harpoon. The whale, suddenly stung, threw up his huge tail and disappeared in a whirlpool of green water. To the harpoon was fastened about 30 fathoms of line, on the end of which was a stout cask. This was thrown overboard and a moment later it was whisked out of sight by the whale in his vain efforts to escape. The latter came to the surface about a mile from where he had gone down, swimming round and round, seeming to have the line wound around him and the floating cask hampered him. The hunters lay off and watched his struggles, which made the water boil. After a while he quired down so that the whalers were enabled to get within 10 yards of him and put a charge of slugs and bullets into his head from an old-fashioned flint lock, bell muzzle duck gun. That soon had him floating, belly up, stone dead. The body was then towed to a point near Little Nahant beach, from whence it is the intention to tow it as close in shore as possible.

The whale is evident an old one, as he has his half covered with seaweed. Deeply imbedded in his back was an ancient harpoon, badly rusted but with the inscription "Hiram K. Swain, Nantucket, 1853" still legible. The Nahant whalers are in high glee, as there has been considerable rivalry between them and their Swampscott brothers over the prospective capture of the whale.

A LEVIATHAN.—On Sunday last, Mr. Alexander M. Myrick discovered a whale of the fin-back species about sixty feet long washed ashore near the Humane House at the southward of Mad-dequecham Valley. He soon met Mr. Frederick Crocker, who on learning the circumstance, procured a rope which he made fast to the animal and then came to town for assistance. No one however cared to try out the monster, owing to the lack of facilities on the island, and he remained undisturbed for two days exposed to the sun and waves, during which time he bloated considerably. He was taken off by the tide Monday night and disappeared.

Nov. 26, 1891

May 30, 1857

June 24, 1880



52

**A VALUABLE WHALE.**—The schooner Watchman, Hussey, which has recently returned to this port from a whaling voyage, captured a sick sperm whale in Sam Bay, from which they obtained eleven barrels of oil, which at the present market price is valued at about \$450. From the carcass of this whale 600 pounds of ambergris was obtained, which sold in Boston the present week for the sum of \$10,000, making the whale of the value of \$10,450, which is, we think, the most valuable whale on record.—Ambergris possesses a peculiar scent, which it always retains, and is used in the manufacture of perfumery. It is rarely obtained, and commands a great price.

Sept. 1856

**SETTLED.**—The parties interested in the recent whaling expeditions from Tuckernuck have had some difficulty in arriving at a final settlement of the voyage, Capt. Clisby and Mr. George E. Coffin having put in a claim for a larger percentage of the net proceeds than the rest were willing to allow, and on Tuesday of last week, after considerable discussion the matter was left to Capt. Henry R. Plaskett and Mr. R. B. Hussey as referees, who called in as associate Capt. George H. Brock. A sealed decision was rendered the next morning, with the provision that it should not be opened until all the parties at interest had given their consent in writing to abide by the referees' decision. This step was taken for the reason that some of those interested had been absent when it was decided to place the case in the hands of referees. The seal was broken Thursday forenoon, and the award was made as follows: Capt. Clisby, one extra share; Mr. Coffin, 1-2 share extra; J. B. Macy, for services, \$25; Samuel C. Crawford, use of whaleboat, \$30. The net proceeds of the "voyage" is variously estimated at from \$2200 to \$2400.

June 17, 1886

**FOUND.**—A whale of the fin-back species, sixty-three feet in length was found upon the beach at Smith's Point one day last week. It had probably laid there some time, as the blubber was blasted.

June 23, 1861

## There She Blows!

### WHALING FROM TUCK- ERNUCK.

#### TWO WHALES STRUCK BUT ONLY ONE SAVED.

On Sunday morning of last week a small school of whales were descried from Tuckernuck, sporting in the waters off Smith's point. Capt. Timothy F. Clisby, late of schooner Era, of New London, happened to be stepping on Tuckernuck at the time, and, accompanied by several of the islanders, he came to town and procured from Joseph B. Macy, Esq., such whaling gear as he had on hand, and returned to Tuckernuck to watch for the leviathans.

The observatory of Mr. George B. Coffin was utilized for a "look-out," and Tuesday morning whales were again sighted. A boat was quickly manned by Capt. Clisby, Messrs. George E. Coffin, (boatsteerer,) George B. Coffin, (father of the above, who, notwithstanding his 72 years, was as full of enthusiasm as any of the younger men), Edward B. Dunham, Elbert M. Dunham, Arthur P. Dunham, Charles Eldredge, Amos Hamilton and George Fisher. At 7.30 o'clock they struck a sixty barrel right whale, which immediately turned flukes and headed out to sea, towing the boat after him at a lively pace. Hour after hour he continued his flight. Only once were they able to haul up near enough to dart in a lance, and then the monster kept miling around so that a vital spot could not be reached.

#### OBLIGED TO CUT.

Meantime a dense fog had settled down upon them, they were some thirty miles or more from land, night was coming on, and there were no provisions in the boat, therefore it was deemed imprudent to hold on longer, so a drag bearing the name of J. B. Macy was fastened to the whale and at 2.30 P. M., the line was reluctantly cut. One of the irons left in the whale bore the mark "Abbie Bradford."

They were now far out on the broad ocean, enveloped by an impenetrable mist,

#### WITHOUT A COMPASS,

and dependent wholly upon the general direction of the "swell" to guide them. Shaping their course as nearly as they could judged for Tuckernuck they landed after five hours hard pulling upon the island of Muskeget, tired, wet and hungry. Here they were

#### HOSPITABLY RECEIVED BY THE STATION CREW,

who ministered to their immediate necessities, supplied them with dry clothing, and showed them every possible attention. Wednesday afternoon several of the parties came to town, procured another boat and some additional supplies, and returned to Tuckernuck the following day. Meantime a sharp look-out was maintained for the return of the whales and Saturday morning they were again sighted a few miles off shore. This time

**TWO WHALEBOATS WERE MANNED,** one by Capt. Clisby, Messrs. George E. Coffin, Joseph P. Gardner, Charles Brookes, Edward B. Dunham and John McCullum; the other by Messrs. George B. Coffin, Everett Coffin, John A. Scott, Elbert Dunham, and Arthur Dunham. The first boat soon

#### STRUCK A THIRTY-BARREL SCRAG RIGHT WHALE,

which after a short struggle they succeeded in dispatching. The monster, however, was no sooner dead than he rolled over and sunk in eleven fathoms of water, and they were obliged to buoy him and wait for him to rise, which it was thought he would do in about forty-eight hours. Monday morning a boat's crew came to town for try-pots and other paraphernalia, it being decided to try him out on Tuckernuck. Meantime a vigilant watch is being kept for the re-appearance of the school.

Apr. 22, 1886

**A WHALE.**—Our community was somewhat excited on Friday last by the arrival in our harbor of a veritable whale. The news went through the town and old men and young, boys and girls, the lame and deaf, were seen tramping and scampering for the end of the Strait wharf. In the excitement we were carried with the crowd to view the wonderful monster whose grandfather had many years ago made a breakfast on poor Jonah. We had heard many poetic descriptions of the whale, how bright his eyes; how smooth his skin, how elegant his outline; how elastic his tail, how tremendous his roar; how a fountain played from his nostrils, how the foam hissed and spangled in his wake, and how he frolicked away his sweet silver life bathed by undulating waves and sporting upon sparkling waters.

The fish had been towed from the "shoals" and the skipper of the fortunate craft that killed him made us welcome and gave us an opportunity to gaze on his prize most sufficiently near. The whale was floating partly under the water which was clear so that he could be examined with accuracy. Such an uncouth, puffed up, strange and stupid looking affair no mortal who had not seen him could imagine. He lay on his side with his great dreary gaping mouth, which had now ceased to suck in water by the hogshead, lying extended in the brine, and his great dull goggles of eyes half closed and apparently half staring at the crowd upon the wharf and the denser one peering over the sides of the good schooner Samuel Chase. There floated a slippery, wet, legless, black, and bloated mass of matter more than thirty feet long and about the shape of an inflated balloon. His tail was going off piece by piece to be stewed or boiled or baked or fricasseed by the old salts who had fed upon his like in distant seas. His head was black and slimy, his tail was black, his back of the most inky hue, set off by a cluster of barnacles here and there which the lads were cutting off for keepsakes. His face was expressionless. One guessed he'd make ten barrels another twenty; one called him a "scragg" another a humback; one said he "was blasted" another that he "had shrunk." And so they discussed the matter while Capt. Maguire was getting his "tackles" aloft preparatory to peeling of his blubber.

How old he was, created more dispute. Some thought him a baby, others that he had arrived at maturity but was "of a small kind." One looked in mouth, like a horse jockey, and set him at "seven." That matter will always remain upon the tablets of the fishes. How many years he had rolled and spouted; how many months he had gaped and "baited" in the caseless wash of the ocean; how many Sundays he had passed gulping down salt

water no mortal man except Agassiz can tell. But all agreed in one thing, that he was valuable enough to pay his pursuers and wondered why, with so many vessels unemployed, and so many sturdy whal-men with nothing to do, there were not more men pursuing him among the shoals, where he, with other fishes, is making that mine of wealth which encircles our little Island, and which can be coined into gold by the skill of our people when they shall have energy enough to undertake it.

Aug. 28, 1861

#### Dead Whale and Blackfish Come Ashore on Island.

A large whale, identified as a sulphur-bottom, washed ashore near "the keypost" between Madaket and Smith's Point this week. The mammal is approximately 55 feet long and is in a state of decomposition.

A blackfish between 14 and 15 feet long has also been reported washed ashore at Tom Nevers Head.

It is understood that a party from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute planned to journey to Nantucket to inspect the island's most recent dead whale, but were prevented from doing so by the weather on Wednesday and Thursday.

No action towards removing the bodies has been taken by any local authorities. The Coast Guard stated that "we don't have anything to do with dead whales once they wash up on the beach".

Neither does anyone else, apparently, and do you blame them?

Apr. 10, 1934



### WHALING AT HOME.

The recent capture of three right whales by boats from our tributary island, Tuckernuck, and the fact that vigilant eyes are on the lookout for more, with weapons ready for the attack, seems to carry us back in imagination to the deeds of the early settlers, our ancestors. In their day, right whales were very numerous about our coast, sporting without fear of danger in waters where they and their progenitors had roamed undisturbed for ages. Rarely had a vessel's keel invaded their favorite feeding-grounds, over which hundreds are now daily and hourly crossing each other's tracks. Britannia might rule the waves, but Leviathan could laugh at her boasted wooden walls, and in these western waters reigned monarch of all he surveyed, until the persistent onslaughts of the Coffins, and Macys and Husseys drove him to more distant haunts, where he was still followed and hunted with the same energy as before.

Our forefathers, from the very circumstances of their situation, took naturally to the business, and they appear to have found valuable auxiliaries in the native Indians who were reported to have been active and skillful boatmen. The stereotyped statement that whale-hunting began here in 1690 may be correct, but we know not exactly on what authority it rests, and incline to the belief that the date should have been placed some years earlier. The old records contain still in legible condition, the memorandum of a contract made with James Loper in 1672 to carry on the business of whaling from our shores, but it is more than doubtful whether such a man ever came here, for the weight of evidence is strongly against it. If he ever took any steps to carry out his part of the contract the old proprietors did not fulfil theirs, for it is quite clear that Loper never owned any lands here, nor does his name ever occur in our records except as already mentioned. One Ichabod Paddock is also mentioned as having been the instructor of old Nantucketers in the arts and mysteries of killing, cutting and trying the whale, but the written chronicles are equally obscure on that point. Whether they were apt scholars under his instruction or were merely self-taught, it is certain that they went into the enterprise with a will, and soon made it a profitable industry. The best single year's work reported is the capture of eighty-six whales, and down to the year 1760, more or less whales were taken by boats from the shores. But their visits had then become few and far between, and meanwhile many vessels had been fitted for Atlantic voyages, and new generations of sea-Nimrods had been born and trained to the hunt of the giant game.

We try to picture in imagination the scenes on our shores in those old days of whaling at home. The rude sheds and try-works near the beach, the boats, armed and equipped for the fight, and the mast-headman, at early morn, climbing to the tall look-out or crow's nest. Fancy the rapid and excited gathering of the clans when the cry was raised that whales were near at hand; the bold bearing of those sturdy men of Anglo-Saxon stock among the crowd of lithe wiry Indians as the boats are launched and put forth to the chase; the conflict with the sea-monster carried on within sight of their homes and friends; the triumphant return of the flotilla with the prize in tow, and the cheery welcome from the matrons and maidens, the daughters of Dionis Coffin and of Sarah Macy, and the mother of Ben. Franklin,

and the aboriginal squaws, all eager to view the rich spoils of war, and to applaud the conquering heroes. The lives of these women had in them more fresh and frequent excitement and less of long-enduring patience and weary suspense than those of their daughters, the Penelopes of a later period, waiting through the slow years of Pacific voyages with only now and then a stray word of intelligence from husbands and lovers.

Now the long voyages are a memory of the past, the stout ships sold off or broken up, and our old occupation practically gone. But recent doings at Tuckernuck go to show that it would be very unsafe for the right whale to revisit his old haunts, for we have still young men who can wield the harpoon and lance to good purpose, and even old men, as we have seen, cannot quite forget the craft of their younger days.

May 6, 1886

**THERE SHE BLOWS.**—Last Tuesday the spirit of the chase was aroused in the breasts of a lot of young blood on Tuckernuck by the appearance of two whales off the south side of that island, and a boat was quickly manned by Capt. T. F. Clisby, and Messrs. G. E. Coffin, George Fisher, Amos Hamilton, Charles Eldredge, Edward Dunham, who sought the life of one at least of the pair. They had some difficulty in getting alongside in order to get in an iron, but finally succeeded in getting fast to a large right whale—no finback or serag, but a veritable sixty-barrel right whale; after a ten-mile run they succeeded in drawing near enough to throw in a lance, though the whale kept milling around so that a vital spot could not be reached. Night was coming on, and a dense fog prevailed, and there being no food in the boat, it was deemed prudent to return to the shore. A drag was fastened to the whale, which bore the name of J. B. Macy, and the line was then cut, the whale at the time spouting thin blood. One of the irons in the "fish" bore the mark "Abbie Bradford." It is to be regretted that the whale was not secured.

Apr. 7, 1886

**SETTLED THE VOYAGE.**—The parties interested in the recent whaling expeditions from Tuckernuck have had some difficulty in arriving at a final settlement of the voyage, Capt. Clisby and Mr. George E. Coffin having put in a claim for a larger percentage of the net proceeds than the rest were willing to allow, and on Tuesday, after considerable discussion, the matter was left to Capt. Henry R. Plaskett and Mr. R. B. Hussey, as referees, who called in the advice of Capt. George H. Brock. A sealed decision was rendered the next morning, with the provision that it should not be opened until all the parties at interest had given their consent in writing to abide by the referee's decision. This step was taken for the reason that some of those interested had been absent when it was decided to place the case in the hands of referees. The seal was broken Thursday forenoon, and the award was made as follows: Capt. Clisby, one extra share; Mr. Coffin, 1/2 share extra; J. B. Macy, for services, \$25; Samuel C. Crawford, use of whaleboat, \$30. The net proceeds of the "voyage" is variously estimated at from \$2200 to \$2400. The latter amount is probably very nearly correct.

June 12, 1886

### Went Whaling on the Bar.

Thirty-two years ago last Sunday, while cruising near Nantucket bar in catboat Mable, Captains John M. Winslow and Heman Eldredge discovered a whale aground on the shoal. Hastening ashore they landed on the Cliff beach to secure assistance, and one of the Jersey wrecking boats was manned by a volunteer crew, with Captains Charles C. Mooers and Obed Swain on board, starting in pursuit of the whale with an improvised whaling outfit. By the time the men reached the bar again the whale had floated off with the rising tide and was bound up into the chord of the bay. The boat gave chase and followed the leviathan about eighteen miles, finally giving up the task and returning to shore. Although the boat came near enough to strike the whale once or twice, it was not near enough to reach a vital spot, and with their crude outfit the men thought discretion the better part of valor. Captain Mooers ventured the opinion that the whale was a forty-barrel fellow, and had the boat been able to put off half an hour sooner they would undoubtedly have succeeded in capturing the prize.

Nov 7, 1908

**WHALING EXTRAORDINARY.**—If our day of chasing whales is gone by, we have only to stay quietly at home and let them come to us. One drifted ashore near Siasconset on Monday morning last, in an advanced stage of "mellowness," and was first discovered by Mr. James T. Worth. On Tuesday morning, another was brought to the Bar by a fishing-smack, which had picked him up in the vicinity of Tuckernuck shoals. A survey having been held, which pronounced the blubber worth trying out, the prize was taken in tow by Capt. Alexander B. Dunham, and was secured at the Straight Wharf on Tuesday noon. Cutting gear was got up on board schooner Abby Bradford, and operations were commenced at once, under the superintendence of Capt. Obed Swain. The carcass, after having been stripped of the blubber, was sold at auction on Wednesday, for five dollars. The blubber was carried to the try-works of Mr. Amariah Fisher, on South Wharf, where it was boiled out, yielding twenty five barrels of oil.

Some blubber was taken from the whale at Siasconset, and a few gallons of oil obtained; also a small quantity (two or three pounds) of a substance believed to be ambergris, not fully matured, which has been sent to those skilled in such matters, to be examined and tested.

Nothing is known of the cause of death of either of these whales; but it is a remarkable circumstance that two of them should have appeared simultaneously. The operation of "cutting in" at the Straight Wharf, excited great interest among our people, and crowds witnessed it, though the odor wafted to them was not exactly a spiey breeze from Arabia Felix.

Oct. 21, 1871

**WHALING.**—While Captains John M. Winslow and Heman Eldredge were cruising near the bar in the yacht Mable, Sunday forenoon, they raised a whale aground on the bar, near Capaum pond. Capt. Winslow landed at the Cliff and came to town to secure assistance, and Captains Charles C. Mooers and Obed Swain secured one of the Jersey wrecking boats, shipped a crew, and with a line and two irons started in pursuit of the leviathan, which had, in the meantime, got off the bar. He was discovered near the bell boat, heading toward the chord of the bay. He was approached several times, but not near enough to get a good opportunity to dart, as the boat was too clumsy to handle and could not be propelled sufficiently fast to come near enough to strike him properly; and it was deemed best not to fasten to him in the small, although an opportunity was offered, for the boat, of course, was not properly equipped for the business, and any such attempt would have been accompanied by too much risk. After chasing the animal—which was a forty barrel right whale—about eighteen miles, the crew gave up the contest and returned to the wharf, leaving his whaleship to go his way unmolested. Capt. Mooers affirms that if they had been able to obtain a whaleboat they could have secured the prize easily.

We think that a whaleboat should be purchased, equipped and kept in order for occasions of the kind. The investment might be an unprofitable one for a number of years, perhaps; but there is no telling when a like opportunity will offer, and the boat and crew might then reap a good return for the money they might invest. It is estimated that a boat could be procured and fitted with all necessary apparatus for \$100.

Nov. 11, 1871

**STRUCK BY A WHALE.**—Off Nantucket on Tuesday, 12th inst., a sportive whale nearly caused the destruction of one of the New York pilot boats. The Alexander M. Lawrence, No. 4, was cruising along at the rate of about thirteen knots an hour. When nearly twenty miles east of Nantucket there was a terrific shock that shook the craft from stem to stern. The boat came into collision with a huge black object and was struck on the port bow. It seemed as though the Lawrence would capsize. She dipped until the water nearly reached the hatches, and those below rushed on deck. Looking back, the seamen beheld the whale rolling and tumbling about. No damage was done to the boat.

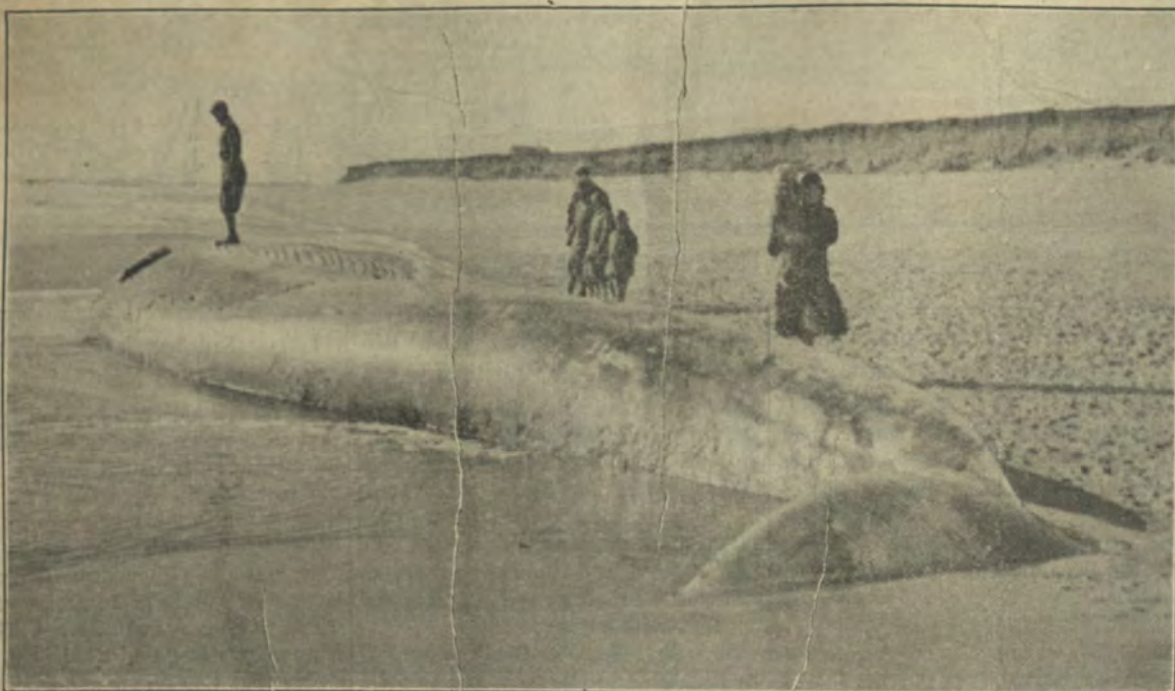
May 30, 1885

**THE WHALE.**—Commercial Wharf was the most fashionable promenade in town during Friday of last week, when everybody and his wife and children went down to get a view of the whale and to witness the operation of "cutting in." But time had exerted its mellowing influence, and the odor emitted was not exactly of Arabia Felix. Our neighbor Freeman was on the spot, and succeeded in getting some fine views of the scene, which may be examined at his rooms, and copies purchased by such as may desire them.

The whale measured 63 feet in length, and yielded about 22 barrels of oil. Post-mortem examinations have failed to develop anything new as to the cause of his death, which remains a mystery.

Apr 9, 1870





The carcass of the sulphur-bottom whale as it rested on the shore at Maddaquecham, partly buried by the sand. A few hours later the sea came up around it and carried it off-shore again, later to be deposited on 'Sconset beach.

### Large Sulphur-bottom Whale Comes to Nantucket.

Nantucket has been whaling again—that is, a whale came to the island of its own accord, visited several places along the south shore for a day at a time, and then went off-shore to parts unknown.

It was a "sulphur-bottom", which is one of the largest species of the whale family, and George Grant, Nantucket's last real whaleman, estimates that this fellow was from 60 to 65 feet long. It came ashore near Nobadeer last Friday morning, and was washed up high and dry by the surf.

There it remained all day and was the scene of great interest among the islanders, hundreds of whom flocked across the island to see what a real whale looked like. During the night the creature took a jaunt to the eastward and Saturday morning showed up on the beach about a mile farther along than it was on Friday.

In the meantime it had "bloated" and felt quite puffed up over its exploit—visiting the island which the whaling industry made famous years before. But the carcass soon began to show signs of wear, with folks poking it with knives and sticks, and some people lugging off pieces of bone taken from the fins.

The tide forced the sand up around it, so that Saturday afternoon, when the accompanying photo was snapped, much of the whale was buried by the sand. A tape-line measurement at that time showed 53 1-2 feet in sight, with a large portion of the tail and a portion of the nose covered with the sand. The measurement showed that Mr. Grant knew what he was talking about when he took a look at the whale the previous afternoon and said it was from 60 to 65 feet long.

To the surprise of those who went down to the south side of the island to see the unusual spectacle of a real whale lying on the shore, after all these years, there was no objectionable odor and it was possible to walk around the body and even to climb over it without noticing any unpleasant smell.

This indicated that the whale had not been dead long, but no reports were received of anyone losing a whale, nor of one strayed away or stolen, yet a heavy rope attached to the tail was evidence that it had been tethered somewhere or to something or other within a few days.

Saturday night the wind and tide took the whale off-shore again and the next morning left it on 'Sconset beach, almost directly in front of "The Buoy", the summer home of Mr. and Mrs. P. A. Williams of Springfield. The villagers were starting to wonder what they would do with their visitor, and how to get rid of it before its presence began to get unwelcome.

Weather conditions solved the problem, however, for the southeast storm was followed by a high tide and a strong northwest wind, and away went the whale to parts unknown.

Nothing in recent years has attracted more people to the south shore than the presence of the whale over the last week-end. Young and old drove over to see the unusual sight. Some folks could recall when a whale was towed into the harbor and cut up along side a vessel docked at one of the wharves; others recalled the whaling outfits that were maintained on Nantucket and Tuckernuck for many years after the last whale-ship was sent out from Nantucket. But to

have a big sulphur-bottom come ashore of its own accord, take a couple of jaunts along the beach by night and rest on the beach by day where folks could see him, was unusual even for Nantucket.

The island got a lot of good advertising out of the whale's visit, anyway, and the Boston Globe featured it in its broadcasts, which helped a lot and doubtless interested the mainland folks, to whom a 65-foot sulphur-bottom whale was more difficult to realize than it was for the people of Nantucket.

The Nantucket Historical Society missed a golden opportunity to have the skeleton of a real whale added to its collection in the Whaling Museum next summer. As the carcass lay on the beach at Maddaquecham it would not have been at all difficult to have safely moored it to the shore, with a strong chain and anchor.

The position at Maddaquecham was where it could not have annoyed anyone and during the winter months it would have not become objectionable. The shore birds would have stripped the flesh away and had food enough to last them all winter.

Weather and sun would have done the rest and the skeleton of a whale could have been preserved. Possibly it might not have been sweet enough for exhibition purposes in the Museum next season, but time would have mellowed it. At any rate, it would have been the skeleton of a real whale preserved to posterity on the island where real whale-men were born and thrived; from which port whale-ships sailed for every corner of the globe; and where the rich cargoes of oil brought home built up this wonderful town far out to sea.

### "There She Blows!"—A Whale Off the South Shore.

Nantucket has had a rather interesting visitor this week—that is, of interest to present-day folks. Last Sunday morning a large whale suddenly appeared off Surfside and it did not take long before the news spread to town and there was a general rush across the island to the south shore.

At one time the whale was so near the beach that the barnacles could be seen on his body, and he performed all kinds of antics as he splashed around and entertained the onlookers gathered on the shore. Various estimates were of course made regarding the size of the whale, but those in a position to judge and who had seen whales before, were of the opinion that it was between forty and fifty feet long.

In the afternoon the whale moved off-shore, but early Monday morning it put in an appearance further eastward and came in close to the shore at Tom Nevers—so close that those living at the lodge building could enjoy the unusual sight of a whale close at hand.

The creature worked off-shore during the forenoon and went still further to the eastward, being off Low Beach at noon, but so far from the shore that it could only be seen through a field-glass.

The whale seemed to be passing his time inside of the rips and was evidently finding plenty of "feed" there, which was the reason for it to remain in this vicinity so long. Whether it was a "fin-back" or a "sulphur-bottom" seemed to be a question, but a few years ago, when there were still some whale-men alive, there would have been no question about it—they would have known at the first glance.

Aug. 31, 1926



Sch. "ABBE GRADFORD."

"Cutting In" a Whale at Nantucket in the Early '70's.

Nov. 5, 1932



# Inquirer and Mirror.

Guaranteed Circulation, 1350 Copies.

[Correspondence of The Evening Post.]  
A NANTUCKET INCIDENT.

WHALE-FISHING AT HOME—THE CHASE OF  
LAST APRIL—OLD WHALERS AT WORK—GO-  
ING AFTER A BOATED WHALE—CUTTING UP  
AND TRYING OUT.

NANTUCKET, Mass.

The summer visitor at Nantucket this season has a new fund of entertainment in listening to the story of the unprecedented catch of whales off the western end of the island in April last. There were five, some say six, of the cetaceans captured by Capt. Clisby and his crew of Tuckernuckers. I heard a pretty graphic story of the affair from an old summer resident who, as good luck would have it, was on the island at the time. "On a Monday morning in April," he told me, "it was the 19th, to be exact, the Arcadian quiet of Nantucket out of season was broken. A whale-boat with five sturdy rowers on thwarts and Capt. Clisby of the whale schooner *Era*, of New London, at the steering oar, shot round the jetty at the mouth of the harbor, and in a few moments drew along-side the barnacled timbers of Macy's wharf. The Captain betook himself to an outfitter's shop, the men stopped to talk with old cronies on the street corners, and in a few moments, without the intervention of Billy, the town crier, all Nantucket knew that Capt. Clisby and his crew had taken a whale the Saturday before off Tuckernuck. The monster was expected to rise that day, and the crew were now after the necessary 'gear' to take off the blubber and try it out. The news met me as I came out from breakfast at 7.30 A. M., and I hurried down to the wharf to investigate. Half-a-dozen men were loading into a cart an iron trying pot, whose size I can best indicate by saying that it held 180 gallons and weighed 600 pounds. Two others were coiling in the street about fifty fathoms of rope that was being slowly paid out from the dim recesses of Macy's ship store, while as many more were rolling to the head of the wharf huge casks, holding seven barrels each, whose pickled staves and huge heads gummed with oil told more than one voyage round to the Pacific.

"I had made a study of the off-shore whaling, as prosecuted on the eastern end of Long Island. I had enjoyed the personal acquaintance of Capt. Edwards, Capt. Downing, and other veterans of the chase in that cradle of the whale fishery, but I had never yet had an opportunity of seeing the landing and trying-out of a whale; hence I determined to witness the one in hand. Capt. Clisby, a clear-eyed, wiry, stout Nantucketer of perhaps thirty-five, told me he intended to land the whale on the north beach of Tuckernuck, a large island lying to the northward of Nantucket, and I readily gained permission to accompany the party going out to Tuckernuck to transport the casks and other appliances. So after the try-pot, the four casks, the coil of rope, two lances, two harpoons, several spades, a mincing-knife, a boarding-knife, and a huge iron skimmer has been loaded on the little *Vesta* (which visitors to Nantucket will recognize as one of the fastest of the fleet of pleasure boats belonging to the town), we began beating down the harbor, and were soon at sea. The 'crew' comprised Capt. Jernegan and mate Horace Cash, both old whalers of a score of voyages, and I was sole passenger. Away to the westward nine miles the island of Tuckernuck, our destination, rose dimly out of the haze. It was not exactly a contrary wind that befell the *Vesta* once outside the harbor, but no wind at all—a dead calm. She lay for an hour under the windows of Eastman Johnson's cottage, 'like a painted ship upon a painted ocean.' The 19th day of April will be remembered at Nantucket as a July day for heat and calm. By and by, lying helpless, we saw the whale-boat shoot out beyond the jetty and come up at a spanking rate, the oars rising and falling with the precision of a man-of-war boat. It reached us just as a light breeze sprang up from the westward, the men hove a line aboard, and the *Vesta* took the lighter boat in tow, part of the crew clambering on board her, and part remaining in their own boat. Capt. Clisby was among the former, which gave the passenger an opportunity to inquire about the taking of the whale.

Capt. Clisby was inclined to speak modestly of his exploits. "We first sighted a whale off Tuckernuck," he began, "last Tuesday morning. I was visiting my mate, George Coffin, on Tuckernuck at the time, and that morning about seven he came running in with news that whales were blowing off the island. Sure enough, there they were, beauties, showing heads and flukes in the surf and spouting columns of water in the air. Of course, there was a little flurry. We hurried together our 'scratch' crew—there was but one whaler in the lot except Coffin and me—and put to sea without a compass on board or a bite of anything to eat. I took the steering oar, and Coffin stood in the bow with the harpoon. Soon we drew up to a sixty-barrel whale, and Coffin buried his iron deep. At once the brute shot forward like a rocket, towing the boat so swiftly that the water rose up on either side of her like a wall. These spurts lasted perhaps for half a mile, when he would stop and sulk a while, then start off again. Those stops we improved by getting

nearer him in order to use the lance. I was now in the bow with my lance poised, having exchanged with Coffin as soon as he struck. "It needs skill and caution as well as nerve to approach a whale in this condition. If you get a little too far on either side he will see you. If you get directly in his wake he knows it by some means, we cannot tell how, and sounds at once. You must come up quartering to get within lancing distance. By and by we were so near that I thought it best to strike, though the boat was not where an experienced crew would have put her, and as I struck the men backed water so quickly that the lance was left in the wound. It stayed there an hour and a half before the old fellow quieted down so we could strike again. The last blow touched the life; he spouted blood in torrents, stood up on his head and fairly shrieked, and lashed the sea till foam and spray deluged us from stem to stern. Then off he went, heading seaward. We followed for hours, expecting the death flurry every minute, but by and by, night coming on, we were forced to cut the line and let him go. We were in a nice position then, twenty miles from land, in our one open boat; fog so thick you could cut it; darkness only a few hours distant; with nothing to eat, and faint from having eaten nothing since morning. We discovered, too, that we had no compass, and the only way we could tell where the land lay was by the surges rolling in; however, we followed them, and at 7.30 landed at Muskeget, close by the life-saving station, where we spent the night.

"Last Saturday morning, four days later, we raised another school of whales, and put out better equipped and with a better crew, struck a whale, and in fifteen minutes he was lying dead on the bottom in eleven fathoms of water. We marked it by tying a buoy to the harpoon line with a red flag upon it, and secured it with an anchor attached to the same, then took our bearings and rowed in. A whale rises to the surface when his gall-sac bursts, which occurs in from forty-eight to seventy-two hours. Ours was killed Saturday morning, so he ought to come to the surface some time to-day."

"Odd about whales sinking," said Capt. Jernegan. "I've known whales to sink that never rose. A whale that sounds in two hundred fathoms is apt to stay down. I remember once on the coast of Chili we lost nine whales in three days in this way. Estimating a whale at eighty barrels, we sank on that coast twenty-two hundred barrels for the two hundred we stowed in the hold. Four thousand fathoms of good rope and our irons went with 'em too."

"By this time the *Vesta* was off Maddequet Harbor, taking short tacks in the narrow, intricate channel that winds among the shoals in that part of Nantucket Sound. She was only a light pleasure craft, but she required a skillful pilot to take her among those shoals, some of which were bare at low water, though miles from land. From this point we looked out over 'the Rip' (the narrow channel dividing Tuckernuck from the western end of Nantucket), into the open Atlantic. There was a thundering surf pounding on the bar and covering it with foam. A sailboat came speeding down the passage, doubling and twisting with the channel, its white wings sparkling in the sun. Mate Coffin seized the glass. 'I believe it's Uncle Dunham,' said he, 'and he acts as if he wanted to speak to us.' Sure enough, when the boat came up, its master, a tall, spare man, leaned over the gun-wale and shouted through his hands: 'Whale up at six o'clock this morning; dragged anchor and drifted in two miles; lies just outside the Rip.' 'Who's watching him?' shouted Coffin in reply. 'The whaleboat's out there,' was the reply, and the little boat drew away towards Tuckernuck, leading us and coming to anchor with us about three o'clock near the beach. The men will not go out after the whale until the tide gets to eastward, that is, begins to come in from the sea, when it will help float the Leviathan in; so they have ample time to unload the *Vesta's* cargo, the shallow water not allowing her to come close inshore. They do this in a novel manner, by throwing the casks overboard with a turn of rope around each, and so towing them ashore, while the try-pot is next fastened to the stern of a dory, hollow side up, and made to ride ashore on the waves like a duck. At four the daily mystery of the tide begins. The surf thunders more fiercely on the bar, the patches of sea-weed that have been pointing out to sea turn soundward, flocks of foam come in. In fifteen minutes, a boiling, eddying torrent is rushing like a mill-race through the passage into the sound. Then the boat goes out. The long oars rise and fall in a way that would charm a college crew. This is no boys' play, however. They head on right into the surf, rise and fall a few times with the breakers, and then ride easily on the long swell of the Atlantic. We see them join the other boat, which has been watching the prize, then both set their sails and begin towing it in.

"All goes well until they reach the bar; there the huge beast grounds, and the rear boat, to escape being swamped in the surf, cuts the line. Then both boats dash inside the beach, and the men run along the sand-hills to watch the whale. The rising tide carries it over the bar in twenty minutes, but before they can get into the boats and make fast to it, it has been whirled down nearly to Maddequet Harbor; but from there it is easy to tow it across and beach it on the south shore of Tuckernuck Island, and secure it by a stout line fastened to the flukes and then carried round a fish house standing on shore. When this was done the men went to their homes, and the visitor trudged off a mile over level, sterile, sheep pastures to the house of farmer Brooks, where he found a good supper and a clean bed with the unwonted luxury of woollen sheets awaiting him.

"Three o'clock next morning had been set as the hour of meeting to cut up the whale, but when the visitor reached the scene at five, the men had only begun to arrive. Capt. Clisby called it a whale of 35 barrels, a small specimen compared to one of 250, such as is sometimes caught, but to us it seemed a monster. It was nearly forty feet long, and as it lay on its side, fully six feet above the water, the latter being five feet deep, the fin or flipper, upright, proved to be as tall as a man when one stood up beside it. The Captain began operations by cutting with the spade a deep incision in the neck just forward of the fin, and continuing until he reached and unjointed the huge vertebrae as neatly as a surgeon could have done it. Then the lip of the head was taken off, exposing the upright row of whalebone lining the cavity of the mouth, with its hairy filaments, used by the whale in straining from the water the minute sea animals, called by the men 'britt,' on which he feeds. Meantime half-a-dozen men, under the guidance of Mate Coffin, using the whale boats as a staging, had attacked the body, cutting through the black, shiny skin and peeling off the blubber—which was about ten inches thick—in large square pieces. These were fastened together and towed ashore in readiness for the try-pot, which was set on an improvised fireplace of brick. The men worked busily, intending to strip the upper half of the whale that tide, and then at the next turn strip the other side.

"When the head and all the blubber that could be gotten at had been taken off, the process of trying-out began, the scraps being used as fuel, and continued till the last piece disappeared in the try-pot. 'What's she worth?' I asked Capt. Clisby, as we stood surveying the prize from the shore that morning. 'Well,' said he, 'there's six hundred pounds of bone, worth from two three to dollars a pound, and the thirty-five barrels of oil—well, say from sixteen to eighteen hundred dollars as she lies.'"

C. B. T.

BOAT WHALING IN 1726.—A former resident of this place, now a citizen of San Francisco, sends us the following list of names of parties who were interested in the whale fishery from our shores in the year 1726, with an account of their respective "catches." Boat whaling, it is well known, was pursued as early as 1663, and continued for about a century, when, owing to a scarcity of whales, the business was abandoned. The account which follows is taken from "A journal commenced by William Worth, at the town of Sherburne, island of Nantucket, during the year 1663," and represents the whales caught in the spring of 1726. The list of names includes ancestors of Jacob Barker, Lucretia Mott and Charles J. Folger, and is as follows: John Swain, Andrew Gardner, Jonathan Coffin, Paul Starbuck, Nathan Coffin, Peter Gardner, Nathaniel Folger, Edmund Heath, Bartlett Coffin and Ebenezer Gardner, each captured four whales; James Johnson and Shubael Folger, each five; Clothier Pierce, Shubael Coffin, Nathaniel Allen, George Hussey, Benjamin Gardner and Matthew Jenkins, each three; Silvanus Hussey, William Gardner and Nathaniel Paddock, each two; John Bunker, George Coffin, Richard Coffin, Joseph Gardner, — Staples, and Daniel Gould, each one; Abisha Folger, six. This makes a total of eighty-six whales captured during the spring from these shores.

OLD FASHIONED WHALING.—In early days, the whale-fishery was carried on in boats from our shores. The business finally developed to huge proportions, and in turn dwindled back to nothing. Now one or two boats' crews, under the leadership of Mr. George E. Coffin, have fitted up shore stations on Smith's island and Tuckernuck, and are prepared to go for the first "spout."









The above photo was taken of the carcass of the whale as it was washed ashore near Mioxes. The thousands of persons who went out can readily identify the above picture, which shows the long lower jaw bone which was later removed by "Bunt" Mackay. The whale floated from Mioxes on Sunday night, and was thought to have gone out to sea, but was re-discovered on Tuesday on the beach to the west of Miacomet Pond. Many seagulls gathered about the whale as it lay in the water, three of which can be seen in the left center of the picture.

#### Stranded Whale Attracted Many To The Miacomet Shore.

A dead whale which came ashore near the head of Miacomet Pond, late Monday afternoon, attracted many visitors to the beach and provided a considerable flurry of excitement. Cars and bicycles took the majority of sightseers to the scene, while taxis did a thriving business for several hours.

The whale, which had been dead for some time, was a sulphur bottom—a species of right whale—and was approximately 65 feet in length. A quantity of its baleen—whalebone which hangs from its upper jaw to form a fringe-like sieve for collecting its food—was cut away and many pieces showed themselves in the hands of small boys, coming to town with their prizes.

The appearance of the whale and attendant groups of people along the beach, was reminiscent of the olden days, when drift whales were captured and brought up on the beach through the utilization of the tides.

The chief interest, after the initial curiosity had worn away, was how it could be removed from the beach before the stench of its decaying remains become a nuisance.

Altogether it was an unusual sight and it is probable that the hundreds of people who had never seen a whale—either dead or alive—enjoyed the trip to the shore immensely.

#### 65-Foot Sulphur-bottom Whale Still Lies on South Shore.

As everyone now knows, or should know, Nantucket's most unwelcome visitor of the season, a very dead whale, came ashore near Miacomet sometime during the afternoon of July 13th. The date may or may not have any bearing on the matter.

The 65-foot mammal was first discovered by two children, who excitedly reported their find to Patrolman Lamb of the local police force. The investigation started by the police proved the story to be only too true—there was definitely a very large whale, or something, on the South Shore.

Word spread through the town like wildfire, and many were those who went on a wild whale chase along the shore from Madaket down, the location of the animal being a little vague. Those who did find the creature were very careful to approach from the windward side, as a good southwest breeze was blowing, although many made a bee-line over the bank towards the shore—and then wished that they hadn't.

Wednesday morning dawned foggy, with an off-shore wind, and then the excitement really began. We do not believe that Hummock Pond Road has had so much travel in any one period since its construction.

Model-T Fords, brand-new Buicks, Packards and Cadillacs—even sightseeing buses made the trip to the shore. The rutted roads from Somerset Farm were very muddy, and new roads were laid out in jig time, but the new cars and the sightseeing buses certainly looked incongruous coming bumping through the underbrush.

Later in the day the sun broke through the fog, and the scene on the beach and bank began to look more like a carnival than anything else. Cars were parked helter-skelter, children and dogs were romping in the sand, (the dogs, as a general thing, did not care too much for the whale, dead or not), and even the ice cream man was there with his truck, doing a rushing business.

Much discussion went on as to what kind of a whale it was, and even more so, as to how and why he happened to choose to land on Nantucket. The latter question, of course, went unanswered, but as to the type guesses ranged from a Right to Sulphurbottom and Finback. At any rate, the animal was certainly the most photographed whale in this section of the ocean at the time, for every auto that made the trip out had at least one person with a camera among the passengers.

He wasn't what we would call photogenic, but his picture was snapped steadily for several days.

One of the first persons on the scene after the whale's presence was discovered was George "Bunt" Mackay who with complete disregard for his olfactory senses, waded into the wash beside the creature and carved "Bunt Mackay" into the whale's back with his knife.

According to maritime law, that meant the critter was Bunt's whale, and his alone. On Wednesday, Mackay removed the baleen, or bone that the mammals use to filter their food from the ocean, from the whale's mouth, giving much of the bone away to interested parties in town.

Bunt was especially interested in removing the animal's lower jaw, for it was in perfect condition, and there was not a sulphurbottom whale jawbone on the island. He managed to remove the jawbone later in the week, and the last we knew, one-half of it was drying in the sand on the beach.

However, Bunt began to think that possibly he had bitten off a little more than he could chew when he received a letter through the mail asking him to "Please remove your whale."

The local Board of Health was also busy on this question, and Saturday afternoon, William Winslow, owner of a small but powerful boat, journeyed out to the scene at the Board's request to look over the possibility of towing the whale off-shore. However, Winslow never reached Miacomet that afternoon, for the auto in which he was riding was in a collision and overturned. The occupants of the car received a bad shaking up, but no serious injuries were sustained. The whale remained on the beach.

On Monday morning of this week, it was reported to the police that the whale was gone, and a sigh of relief went up from the Town officials. Chief Mooney and Patrolman Wendell Howes drove out to where the whale had been, and could find no trace of the animal whatsoever.

Tuesday morning, we rented a plane at the airport and went up to cruise along the shore-line, to make sure that the whale really was gone. However, we found that it had moved up the beach to the westward, some mile and a half from its former location, and was then lying in the wash at a point approximately one-half a mile west of Miacomet pond. We reported to Chief Mooney that the animal was still with us, and the Chief gave the Board of Health the sad news that their problem had not been solved by the wind and waves removing the animal's body.

At the present time the Board's course of action is very vague, for since the whale is actually in the water it would have to be pulled onto the beach before it could be buried, and the body is believed to have decomposed too badly to tow it out to sea.

The only other whale to come ashore on the island in recent years was a 65-foot sulphurbottom whale, which came ashore on October 8, 1932, near Nobadeer. It floated off during the night, but the next morning was found at Maddequecham. The second night it floated off again and landed on 'Sconset beach. The third night it floated off and disappeared for good. It is unfortunate that the whale that landed last week did not move in the same way, for the disposal of the animal's body creates a serious problem.

JULY 24, 1948.

July 17, 1948

over



## Funeral Services for Whale Were Held Wednesday.

The last remains of the 65-foot Sulphur-bottom whale which had added atmosphere to the South Shore for almost two weeks were finally laid to rest on Wednesday morning of this past week. There were few in attendance to pay their last respects, and no flowers were strewn over the grave. In fact, most everyone was quite happy to see the last of the creature.

It was decided by the Board of Health that only one man on the island had enough equipment to do the tremendous job, so Walter Glowacki was elected, starting for the scene with his men and 12-ton crane last Saturday morning. It took some time to get things ready and, of course, there was the problem of how they were going to attack the creature to get it on the beach.

The heavy crane was taken down on the sand almost to the water's edge, and the men experimented, trying all ways to get a grip on the slippery carcass. Finally they hit upon the idea of using a toothed "bucket", which could grip the animal's tough hide fairly well.

"Wally" found the whale much heavier than he had planned, for when the crane was fastened to the tail, and they tried to lift the whole animal, the front wheels of the machine left the ground, and the crane nearly joined the whale in the surf. The way the men finally did the job was to put as much strain on the whale as possible by lifting the animal, and then cutting the carcass into pieces with three-foot knives.

The whale was cut into three large sections, each of which was about all that could be lifted by the crane. However, a more difficult or obnoxious job than doing the actual cutting could not be imagined. Wally and his men literally and actually waded into their work, though, and succeeded in carving the creature up.

The workmen estimate that it took about two and one-half days to bury the whale, for the men could not work straight through the day, and only worked a few hours on Sunday. One of their main difficulties was finding the whale when they arrived at the scene in the morning. According to Wally, it would move up and down the beach with the tide during the night, once getting into an almost unreachable position for the crane, causing the operator to break the cables and chains trying to pull on the carcass.

The whale, curiosity though he may have been, is now only a memory. He has been buried good and deep, under from 12 to 14 feet of sand (there was some argument between the men over the depth; it was finally agreed that there was at least 12 feet of sand over the whale), and to speed along the process of nature, over half a ton of lime was put over the remains.

The poor whale was quite a curiosity while lying on the beach. There were few townspeople and visitors who did not look it over. The thrill finally wore off, though, and we think that most people would be quite content not to have another land on the shore for quite a few years, unless, of course, it floats away by itself.

## Inquirer and Mirror.

Guaranteed Circulation, 1350 Copies.

[Correspondence of The Evening Post.]  
A NANTUCKET INCIDENT.

WHALE-FISHING AT HOME—THE CHASE OF LAST APRIL—OLD WHALERS AT WORK—GOING AFTER A BOUYED WHALE—CUTTING UP AND TRYING OUT.

NANTUCKET, Mass.

The summer visitor at Nantucket this season has a new fund of entertainment in listening to the story of the unprecedented catch of whales off the western end of the island in April last. There were five, some say six, of the cetaceans captured by Capt. Clisby and his crew of Tuckernuck. I heard a pretty graphic story of the affair from an old summer resident who, as good luck would have it, was on the island at the time. "On a Monday morning in April," he told me, "it was the 19th, to be exact, the Arcadian quiet of Nantucket out of season was broken. A whale-boat with five sturdy rowers on thwarts and Capt. Clisby of the whale schooner *Era*, of New London, at the steering oar, shot round the jetty at the mouth of the harbor, and in a few moments drew along-side the barnacled timbers of Macy's wharf. The Captain betook himself to an outfitter's shop, the men stopped to talk with old cronies on the street corners, and in a few moments, without the intervention of Billy, the town crier, all Nantucket knew that Capt. Clisby and his crew had taken a whale the Saturday before off Tuckernuck. The monster was expected to rise that day, and the crew were now after the necessary 'gear' to take off the blubber and try it out. The news met me as I came out from breakfast at 7.30 A. M., and I hurried down to the wharf to investigate. Half-a-dozen men were loading into a cart an iron trying pot, whose size I can best indicate by saying that it held 180 gallons and weighed 600 pounds. Two others were coiling in the street about fifty fathoms of rope that was being slowly paid out from the dim recesses of Macy's ship store, while as many more were rolling to the head of the wharf huge casks, holding seven barrels each, whose pickled staves and huge heads gunned with oil told more than one voyage round to the Pacific.

"I had made a study of the off-shore whaling as prosecuted on the eastern end of Long Island. I had enjoyed the personal acquaintance of Capt. Edwards, Capt. Downing, and other veterans of the chase in that cradle of the whale fishery, but I had never yet had an opportunity of seeing the landing and trying-out of a whale; hence I determined to witness the one in hand. Capt. Clisby, a clear-eyed, wiry, stout Nantucketer of perhaps thirty-five, told me he intended to land the whale on the north beach of Tuckernuck, a large island lying to the northward of Nantucket, and I readily gained permission to accompany the party going out to Tuckernuck to transport the casks and other appliances. So after the try-pot, the four casks, the coil of rope, two lances, two harpoons, several spades, a mining-knife, a boarding-knife, and a huge iron skimmer has been loaded on the little *Vesta* (which visitors to Nantucket will recognize as one of the fastest of the fleet of pleasure boats belonging to the town), we began beating down the harbor, and were soon at sea. The 'crew' comprised Capt. Jernegan and mate Horace Cash, both old whalers of a score of voyages, and I was sole passenger. Away to the westward nine miles the island of Tuckernuck, our destination, rose dimly out of the haze. It was not exactly a contrary wind that befell the *Vesta* once outside the harbor, but no wind at all—a dead calm. She lay for an hour under the windows of Eastman Johnson's cottage, 'like a painted ship upon a painted ocean.' The 19th day of April will be remembered at Nantucket as a July day for heat and calm. By and by, lying helpless, we saw the whale-boat shoot out beyond the jetty and come up at a spanking rate, the oars rising and falling with the precision of a man-of-war boat. It reached us just as a light breeze sprang up from the westward, the men hove a line aboard, and the *Vesta* took the lighter boat in tow, part of the crew clambering on board her, and part remaining in their own boat. Capt. Clisby was among the former, which gave the passenger an opportunity to inquire about the taking of the whale.

Capt. Clisby was inclined to speak modestly of his exploits. 'We first sighted a whale off Tuckernuck,' he began, 'last Tuesday morning. I was visiting my mate, George Coffin, on Tuckernuck at the time, and that morning about seven he came running in with news that whales were blowing off the island. Sure enough, there they were, beauties, showing heads and flukes in the surf and spouting columns of water in the air. Of course, there was a little flurry. We hurried together our 'scratch' crew—there was but one whaler in the lot except Coffin and me—and put to sea without a compass on board or a bite of anything to eat. I took the steering oar, and Coffin stood in the bow with the harpoon. Soon we drew up to a sixty-barrel whale, and Coffin buried his iron deep. At once the brute shot forward like a rocket, towing the boat so swiftly that the water rose up on either side of her like a wall. These spurts lasted perhaps for half a mile, when he would stop and sulk a while, then start off again. Those stops we improved by getting nearer him in order to use the lance. I was now in the bow with my lance poised, having exchanged with Coffin as soon as he struck. 'It needs skill and caution as well as nerve to approach a whale in this condition. If you get a little too far on either side he will see you. If you get directly in his wake he knows it by

some means, we cannot tell how, and sounds at once. You must come up quartering to get within lancing distance. By and by we were so near that I thought it best to strike, though the boat was not where an experienced crew would have put her, and as I struck the men backed water so quickly that the lance was left in the wound. It stayed there an hour and a half before the old fellow quieted down so we could strike again. The last blow touched the life; he spouted blood in torrents, stood up on his head and fairly shrieked, and lashed the sea till foam and spray deluged us from stem to stern. Then off he went, heading seaward. We followed for hours, expecting the death flurry every minute, but by and by, night coming on, we were forced to cut the line and let him go. We were in a nice position then, twenty miles from land, in our one open boat; fog so thick you could cut it; darkness only a few hours distant; with nothing to eat, and faint from having eaten nothing since morning. We discovered, too, that we had no compass, and the only way we could tell where the land lay was by the surges rolling in; however, we followed them, and at 7.30 landed at Muskeget, close by the life-saving station, where we spent the night.

"Last Saturday morning, four days later, we raised another school of whales, and put out better equipped and with a better crew, struck a whale, and in fifteen minutes he was lying dead on the bottom in eleven fathoms of water. We marked it by tying a buoy to the harpoon line with a red flag upon it, and secured it with an anchor attached to the same, then took our bearings and rowed in. A whale rises to the surface when his gall-sac bursts, which occurs in from forty-eight to seventy-two hours. Ours was killed Saturday morning, so he ought to come to the surface some time to-day.

"Odd about whales sinking," said Capt. Jernegan. 'I've known whales to sink that never rose. A whale that sounds in two hundred fathoms is apt to stay down. I remember once on the coast of Chili we lost nine whales in three days in this way. Estimating a whale at eighty barrels, we sunk on that coast twenty-two hundred barrels for the two hundred we stowed in the hold. Four thousand fathoms of good rope and our irons went with 'em too.'

"By this time the *Vesta* was off Maddequet Harbor, taking short tacks in the narrow, intricate channel that winds among the shoals in that part of Nantucket Sound. She was only a light pleasure craft, but she required a skillful pilot to take her among those shoals, some of which were bare at low water, though miles from land. From this point we looked out over 'the lip' (the narrow channel dividing Tuckernuck from the western end of Nantucket), into the open Atlantic. There was a thundering surf pounding on the bar and covering it with foam. A sailboat came speeding down the passage, doubling and twisting with the channel, its white wings sparkling in the sun. Mate Coffin seized the glass. 'I believe it's Uncle Dunham,' said he, 'and he acts as if he wanted to speak to us.' Sure enough, when the boat came up, its master, a tall, spare man, leaned over the gunwale and shouted through his hands: 'Whale up at six o'clock this morning; dragged anchor and drifted in two miles; lies just outside the lip.' 'Who's watching him?' shouted Coffin in reply. 'The whaleboat's out there,' was the reply, and the little boat drew away towards Tuckernuck, leading us, and coming to anchor with us about three o'clock near the beach. The men will not go out after the whale until the tide gets to eastward, that is, begins to come in from the sea, when it will help float the leviathan in; so they have ample time to unload the *Vesta's* cargo, the shallow water not allowing her to come close inshore. They do this in a novel manner, by throwing the casks overboard with a turn of rope around each, and so towing them ashore, while the try-pot is next fastened to the stern of a dory, hollow side up, and made to ride ashore on the waves like a duck. At four the daily mystery of the tide begins. The surf thunders more fiercely on the bar, the patches of sea-weed that have been pointing out to sea turn soundward, flocks of foam come in. In fifteen minutes, a boiling, eddying torrent is rushing like a mill-race through the passage into the sound. Then the boat goes out. The long oars rise and fall in a way that would charm a college crew. This is no boys' play, however. They head on right into the surf, rise and fall a few times with the breakers, and then ride easily on the long swell of the Atlantic. We see them join the other boat, which has been watching the prize, then both set their sails and begin towing it in.

"All goes well until they reach the bar; there the huge beast grounds, and the rear boat, to escape being swamped in the surf, cuts the line. Then both boats dash inside the beach, and the men run along the sand-hills to watch the whale. The rising tide carries it over the bar in twenty minutes, but before they can get into the boats and make fast to it, it has been whirled down nearly to Maddequet Harbor; but from there it is easy to tow it across and beach it on the south shore of Tuckernuck Island, and secure it by a stout line fastened to the flukes and then carried round a fish house standing on shore. When this was done the men went to their homes, and the visitor trudged off a mile over level, sterile, sheep pastures to the house of farmer Brooks, where he found a good supper and a clean bed with the unwonted luxury of woollen sheets awaiting him.

"Three o'clock next morning had been set as the hour of meeting to cut up the whale, but when the visitor reached the scene at five, the men had only begun to arrive. Capt. Clisby called it a whale of 35 barrels, a small specimen compared to one of 250, such as is sometimes caught, but to us it seemed a monster. It was nearly forty feet long, and as it lay on its side, fully six feet above the water, the latter being five feet deep, the fin or flipper, upright, proved to be as tall as a man when one stood up beside it. The Captain began operations by cutting with the spade a deep incision in the neck just forward of the fin, and continuing until he reached and unjointed the huge vertebrae as neatly as a surgeon could have done it. Then the lip of the head was taken off, exposing the upright row of whalebone lining the cavity of the mouth, with its hairy filaments, used by the whale in straining from the water the minute sea animals, called by the men 'britt', on which he feeds. Meantime half-a-dozen men, under the guidance of Mate Coffin, using the whale boats as a staging, had attacked the body, cutting through the black, shiny skin and peeling off the blubber—which was about ten inches thick—in large square pieces. These were fastened together and towed ashore in readiness for the try-pot, which was set on an improvised fireplace of brick. The men worked busily, intending to strip the upper half of the whale that tide, and then at the next turn strip the other side.

"When the head and all the blubber that could be gotten at had been taken off, the process of trying-out began, the scraps being used as fuel, and continued till the last piece disappeared in the try-pot. 'What's she worth?' I asked Capt. Clisby, as we stood surveying the prize from the shore that morning. 'Well,' said he, 'there's six hundred pounds of bone, worth from two three to dollars a pound, and the thirty-five barrels of oil—well, say from sixteen to eighteen hundred dollars as she lies.'

C. B. T.

Oct. 29, 1887

**BIG FISHING.**—On Sunday last Mr. James Dunham, of Tuckernuck, discovered a sulphur-bottom whale on the south side of Smith's Island, which had washed ashore sometime during the night. He secured the animal as best he could and then went for assistance. The monster was about forty-two feet in length. On Tuesday the gentleman came to town, secured a couple of try-pots in which to try out the blubber, and returned and commenced operations. We have not heard the quantity of oil the animal yielded.

Tuesday forenoon last, Mr. Obed Orpin, while fishing for bluefish off the south side of the island in a dory, hooked a sturgeon through one of the fins on the right side. The gentleman tugged away on his end of the line, drew him up to the boat and dispatched him with his knife. He then made his anchor road fast about the body, took it into the boat, and after a long and hard pull for about five miles, landed it on the beach. A number of gentlemen were near when he landed and viewed the big fish with considerable curiosity, as did large crowds after it was brought to town and placed on exhibition at the store of Mr. George E. Mooers. Quite a little sum was realized from the exhibition. The carcass was sold to the captain of a smack, who stated that he should take it to Albany.

Aug. 21, 1875

**THERE SHE BLOWS!**—A whale of the fin-back species was discovered at the South Shore, near the head of Maddequet valley, on Sunday last, by Mr. Alexander M. Myrick. Meeting Mr. Frederick Crocker, and informing him of the circumstance, a rope was procured and the leviathan secured. Many people visited the spot in the afternoon and on Monday, when there being no facilities for 'boiling' on the island (it is hard for us to realize the fact) the carcass was let loose, and drifted off on the next tide.

June 26, 1880

July 31, 1948



Correspondence Inquirer and Mirror.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—I noticed in yours of the 2d inst., an account of a number of large sperm whales which had been captured in previous years. If you will allow me a short space in your paper, I will make a note of a few whales I have helped take in my time. As the good new ship C—— was cruising in lat. 81 05 N, lon. 178 25 W, in June, 1842, we took a sperm whale which made 110 barrels of oil, and the old man said he was a poor whale at that. If they had saved him as close as they do in these days, I think we would have got 120 barrels. In January, 1847, while cruising off Callao, we took a whale that made us 102 barrels, for which I gave each one of the crew of my boat a pound of tobacco, a dozen pipes, one dollar, and a good dinner in Lima, which they got in less than ten days from the time we went alongside of him. His head made 56 barrels. The jaw was 16 feet 8 inches long, that being six inches shorter than the one your paper spoke of in your museum; flukes, 13 feet 4 inches. The jaw was cleaned with all the teeth in (which numbered 44), and was taken on shore to be carried out to Lima, as the old man had promised a large one to a merchant. After we landed it on Callao pier, the mate said he was offered an ounce (\$17) for it, but refused, as it was promised to the merchant. In October, 1849, in lat. 3 21 S, lon. 121 10 W, when we were bound to the Society Islands to fit for home, we took another which made 121 barrels. I think it was in your paper that I saw an account of the bark Wave, some five years ago, taking a sperm whale in 2 or 3 North, nearly home, making 165 barrels, and also saying it was the largest on record at the time. Ship Charles Frederick, of New Bedford, took a sperm whale round the Bonins, while in company with us, that made 145 barrels. His nib end touched the forward skid. I saw some of the teeth that came out of his jaw; they were solid and twelve inches long, and as pretty teeth as I ever saw.

CAPE HORN.

Aug. 16, 1884

For The Inquirer and Mirror.  
Mr. Editor:

It was a mistake to state, as was done in the undersigned communication two weeks ago, that the bone marking the corner of Gull Island Lane and West Centre street, was the rib bone of a whale. Comparison of this bone with the bones marking the corners of lots in the "Sturgis pines" will show that this one is much larger. Undoubtedly it is a portion of the lower jaw of a sperm whale. Conjecture is put out of court by the recollection of one of our citizens, Capt. George H. Brock. He recites the history of this bone. During his boyhood it was brought to the island by Capt. Edward W. Coffin, master of ship Iris, New Bedford, on his return from a whaling voyage about 1837. Capt. Coffin was Mr. Brock's uncle. He gave this bone and probably the whole jaw to Charles W. Gardner, who owned Gull Island and planted this bone and its mate on the two corners of Gull Island Lane and Centre street, as this street was then called. Mr. Brock lived in the neighborhood and vividly recalls this event of his boyhood. This seems fully to answer "Q's" query.

Nantucket, Dec. 4. 1901 M. S. D.

Speaking of steamer Mary & Helen, at Honolulu, April 8, which steamed through the Strait of Magellan, and was reported as the first whaler that ever made that passage, the Provincetown Advocate says:—"This is a mistake. Capt. Harvey Sparks, of Provincetown, made the passage in schooner Mary E. Nason, in December, 1868. This is certainly the first whaler and probably the first sailing vessel that ever made the passage."

The Boston Post adds: We are inclined to think some of the "oldest inhabitants" of New Bedford and Nantucket can tell of a homeward bound whaleship which, many years ago (before 1868,) came through the Strait of Magellan—from the west to east—and made a quick run of it, too. As to merchant sailing vessels, the writer of this paragraph passed through the Strait—from east to west—about July, 1849, or 1850, in the brig Sea Eagle, and there were several other sailing vessels which also passed through the Strait the same Summer. The Provincetown Advocate, in speaking of the first sailing vessel to pass through the Strait, must certainly have lost sight of the historical fact that the old Portuguese navigator Magellan, from whom the passage takes its name, passed through it with sailing vessels A. D. 1519, or three hundred and sixty-one years ago. Since that date, scores of vessels have made the passage, though it is true that whalers have generally preferred the outside route round Cape Horn.

The steamer certainly has a great advantage over sailing-ships on such a voyage, as she might avoid some of the difficulties of anchoring and getting under way again, in case of meeting contrary or baffling winds while in the Strait. We are not certain whether any Nantucket whaler has ever made the passage through, but shall be glad to hear from any of our old seamen who can enlighten us on that point.

Since writing the above, we have learned that the ship Spartan, Capt. Cromwell Morselander, of this port, passed through on the passage west, in 1847; and the ship Washington, Capt. William Clark, of Hudson, went through on the passage out, in 1832, anchoring at night.

#### A Harpoon in a Whale Sixty Years.

Steamer Beluga, at San Francisco, 7th inst., from Arctic ocean, reports in August last in Behring Sea, the Beluga killed a large whale, and when it was cut up, an old harpoon bearing the name of Montezuma upon it was discovered. The head of the harpoon was perfectly preserved, but the shank had been eaten away close to the skin of the whale by the action of the salt water. Every whaleship has her name stamped on the harpoon she uses, and the records show that the Montezuma quit whaling in the South seas some 60 years ago. She belonged in New London, and while lying idle at that port during the war, she was bought by the government and sent with other old hulks down to Charleston harbor, filled with stone, and sunk at the entrance of the bay, to break up blockade running. This veteran whale that carried a harpoon for more than half a century, proved a formidable fighter, and while the Beluga's men were after it, it several times came near escaping. One of the boats had to be cut away to prevent its being drawn under. Finally, after exhausting all devices, the old whale was killed.

Nov. 15, 1890



SPERM WHALING—THE CAPTURE.

#### That Whale.

When Hiram Swain's harpoon was thrown into a whale in 1853, it was hardly supposed that a half century later it would be yielded up by the cetacean to the fishermen of Nahant. But such is the case, and the following is the story of the capture as reported in the daily press:

A right whale, about seventy-five feet in length, and evidently an old settler, was killed off Nahant Saturday by a picked crew of experienced men, made up in Nahant for the purpose. The whale had been reported by several parties during the past few weeks, and Friday night two fishermen who were out in their boats were forced to make a hurried retreat to the shore to escape undue familiarity on the part of his whaleship.

Saturday's whaling party sighted the monster about a quarter of a mile off shore, and proceeding cautiously, were able to get near enough to strike him just behind the head with a harpoon. The whale, suddenly stung, threw up his huge tail and disappeared in a whirlpool of green water. To the harpoon was fastened about thirty fathoms of line, on the end of which was a stout cask. This was thrown overboard, and in a moment it was whisked out of sight by the whale in his efforts to escape.

The whale came to the surface about a mile from where he had gone down, swimming round and round, seeming to have the twine wound around him. The hunters lay off and watched his struggles, which made the water boil. After a while he quieted down so that the whalers were able to get within ten yards of him, and put a charge of slugs and bullets into his head from an old-fashioned flint lock and a duck gun, that soon had him floating belly up and stone dead. The body was then towed to a point near Little Nahant Beach, from which point it is the intention to tow it as close in shore as possible. The whale is evidently an old one, as he is half covered with seaweed. Deeply imbedded in his back was an ancient harpoon, badly rusted, but with the inscription, "Hiram Swain, Nantucket, 1853," still legible. The Nahant whalers are in high glee, as there has been considerable rivalry between them and their Swampscott brothers over the prospective capture of the monster.

The Hiram Swain referred to was a native of this island, and sailed several voyages in whalers from this port.

March 16, 1895

#### Biggest Whale Ever Caught.

Whaling steamer Jeanette arrived at San Francisco recently with the biggest catch of the season, made in Alaskan waters. The number of whales captured was 18, yielding 34,000 pounds of bone. Besides the bone the steamer brought over 300 fox skins and 6 bear skins, and the entire cargo is valued at \$100,000. The steamer had excellent luck, and did not lose a whale nor so much as a fathom of line, nor did any of the crew meet with the slightest accident. J. J. Thatcher, first mate, caught an exceptionally large whale. The bone weighed 3,450 pounds and the whale's head measured 29 feet. This catch was made 45 miles south-east of Herald island. Captain Newth believes it is the largest whale ever caught. Large whales are slow in their movements and are not difficult to conquer. It is the small whales that give the trouble. It required but two bombs to kill the large whale, while it took 14 bombs to kill a small whale that weighed but 1,250 pounds.

Nov. 11, 1899

A BIGGER ONE.—In answer to our inquiry whether any of our whalers could report a greater yield of oil from one sperm whale than 141 barrels (sent home from ship Emma C. Jones), we learn that one was taken by ship Harvest of this port, in 1853, which boiled out 167 barrels, though the jaw was not taken in, owing to bad weather. Sixty barrels were obtained from the head. This whale was taken on the homeward passage in the South Atlantic Ocean, (35° S. 45° W., or thereabouts). We have the statement of Capt. William H. Tice, fully confirmed by that of Mr. John Chinery, who was third mate with him in the Harvest at the time referred to.

1871



There is an interesting discussion going on in New York over the question whether a whale does or does not spout water. What do the men who go down to the sea say about it?—*Boston Traveller*.

We think that those who go down to the sea in ships will agree that the whale does not spout water, although he blows water. To explain this seeming paradox, it must be understood that the blowing of a whale is simply strong respiration or breath, and that the whale is a warm-blooded mammal with lungs like those of land animals, and breathes air only. At the moment of rising to the surface of the sea, he forces out a strong current of air, by which the small quantity of water then standing in the cavity of his spiracle or spout-hole is blown into countless atoms, forming a cloud of spray which looks like white smoke or steam. The form of this cloud of spray differs in the case of different species of whale, so that the practised eye of the whaler can usually distinguish the several varieties, even at a distance of miles. This variety results from the different conformation and direction of the spiracle in the various species of whale, and also from the fact that some species have only one spiracle and others two. The current idea that the whale takes in vast quantities of water and ejects it again in a solid stream like that from a fire-engine is a great mistake, and the pictures which represent him as spouting such streams of water high aloft are simply ridiculous to the eye of the whaler. It is not probable that any water worth mentioning ever finds its way into the whale's lungs, but when mortally wounded he will throw out copious streams or gushes, not of water, but of warm, red blood.

### Whales Caught by Old-time Whalers to be Charted.

The plotting of every whale caught by the Yankee whalers, so far as the records are available, is a work being carried on by Dr. Charles H. Townsend, director of the New York Aquarium. The finished work will be a series of world charts, showing graphically the position of each capture and the month in which the capture was made.

Each species of whale will have its own set of charts, and the species include the sperm, the right, the bowhead, the humpback and the California gray. The types of whales which are now caught by the modern methods of the Norwegian whalers, such as the blue whale and the finback, will not be included, as they could not be captured by the methods of the Yankee whaler.

As the whales will be plotted on the charts in colors indicative of the months captured, the migrations of the whales, as they changed their feeding grounds from month to month, may be studied. The purpose of the charts is to obtain with scientific accuracy this migration and to correlate it with such things as ocean currents, movements of ice floes, temperature and salinity.

The records for this work are being compiled from the old whaling log-books and sea journals. The research is being done by Arthur C. Watson, instructor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and it is hoped that the private owners of log-books will be willing to communicate with him.—*New York Herald-Tribune*.

AUGUST 27, 1932

For the Inquirer and Mirror  
NEW YORK, Jan 25, 1892.

Mr. Editor:

Some time ago, Mr. Herman Oelrichs, of New York, stated that sharks were not in the habit of biting or eating human beings, and offered through the New York *in*, to pay \$500 to any one who could furnish trustworthy evidence of sharks biting what is called "man-eating." Upon hearing of Mr. Oelrichs offer, I wrote to Capt. John A. Beebe, of Nantucket, asking his opinion of the matter. His reply I sent to the *Sun*, and, after some delay, received a copy of the paper containing in part the Captain's letter.

I send the copy to you, with the hope that the subject may be of interest to your readers, especially those who are familiar with the sea.

Yours very sincerely,

WILLIAM C. MACY.

### A Whaler's Shark Story.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *SUN*.—Sir: On learning that Mr. Oelrichs had denied that sharks ever bite or eat human beings, and had offered through THE *SUN* \$500 to any one who could bring trustworthy evidence that they ever did so, I wrote to Capt. John A. Beebe of Nantucket, a man of very wide experience as a whaler, asking for his opinion on the shark question. In reply I received the following letter:

NEW HAVEN, Jan. 8.

DEAR SIR: Sharks, when impelled by hunger do attack and eat human beings. Human bones have repeatedly been taken from the shark's stomach. Sharks in the bays on the coast are usually more voracious than those in the deep ocean. They feed on the numerous fish, and are very expert in catching them. They have a peculiar natural ability to scent blood from afar. Thus, when a whale is killed, though no shark has been seen, sharks suddenly appear in great numbers, so that sometimes I have known them to eat twenty-five tons of the meat during the night. Two men are stationed on the rail of the ship with long spades, and though hundreds are killed, the number does not decrease.

In 1857 I met the bark Elizabeth of New Bedford in the Mozambique Channel. The day previous being calm, the men indulged in sea bathing. A man ventured fifteen yards from the ship, when the lookout from aloft reported a shark on the opposite side of the ship, equally distant. The alarm was given, and the swimmer was making the best of his way to the ship. The shark disappeared, passed under the ship, and soon appeared in the rear of the man, which is there mode of attack. The men prepared a rope and threw an end to the man, which he grasped just as the shark took him by the leg just below the knee, taking the whole calf of the leg, leaving little besides the bone. The man kept a death grip on the rope and was drawn on board. The leg was amputated that night, and I assisted the next day in dressing it. He recovered from the operation, but he died a natural death a year later.

Other instances I could give. There is no doubt whatever that when hungry they will devour any animal they can conquer in their element. I have killed many hundreds of them probably, and have had them about me for twenty-five years. Sincerely yours,

WELLESLEY, MASS. JOHN A. BEEBE.

FIGHTING WHALES.—Professor N. S. Shaler, upon the authority of Captain John Pease, an old and observant whale fisher, writes as follows in the January number of the *American Naturalist*, concerning the frequent struggles between the male sperm whales: "The conflicts between the males of sperm whales cause great damage to the lower jaw; the evidence goes to show that at least two per cent. are crooked more or less, and one in several hundred very badly bent by these struggles. There are two specimens in the small museum at Nantucket which are singularly contorted; one of them is bent laterally into one turn of the spiral. Captain Pease tells me that he found one that was bent sideways at right angles to the proper position and firmly fixed there, seeming to be permanently fastened in this singular position. In fighting, the males rush at each other with opened jaws, and strike in passing. The great speed and power of these massive creatures must lead to the most serious results from such collisions. Captain Pease once found a sperm whale nearly dead on the water, with lower jaw hanging by a single band of ligament a few inches through. Sharks and crustaceans were devouring the creature, but the wrench which had crippled him must have come from one of his own kind."

EVENING WHALING.—*Lively Experience of a Former Nantucket Shipmaster*.—One of our former residents and former whaling captains sends us the following account of one of his experiences while in the whaling service, which will, perhaps, prove interesting to our readers:

On the fifth day of February, 1831, over fifty-four years ago, being near the Kingsmill Group of Islands, in the Pacific Ocean, in a good ship from Nantucket, in company with two English ships, we saw a school of whales distant two miles at sunset. It being calm we lowered three boats, and soon were fast to three different whales. Eight boats came from the English ships, and they all got fast, making eleven boats fast to eleven whales. Now it was dark and cloudy. The whales (fast and loose ones) all came together in a small space so we could speak to one another. Our lines all got across and afloat, and we could not tell where the whale was that we were fast to. The English lines were one size larger than ours. When we had a large line across the head of the boat, we cut it to clear ourselves, and I suppose the English did the same, as I soon found I was cut loose. I made my line fast to another harpoon, and threw it into the first whale I came to, and he went into his flury and soon turned up dead. I lighted my boat lantern, hauled up alongside the whale, and found a harpoon on his top side, with a short piece of English line fast to it. I said to myself that my father was taken prisoner with a cargo of sperm oil by the English in the war of 1812, and now was my chance to get a little of it back; so with my boat knife I cut the harpoon out, and cast it into the deep and put one of my harpoons into the same hole. Each one of our boats got a whale, and towed them to the ship in a calm and in darkness. One of the English captains boarded us the next day, and brought about fifty fathoms of our lines, pretty well cut up, and reported that they got seven whales between the two English ships. There is only one person living on Nantucket at this time who was in that night whaling affair.

### Largest Sperm Whale on Record.

Mr. Henry P. Clapp, of this town, who was in bark Alaska the voyage referred to, hands us an article clipped from the New Bedford *Mercury* from which it appears that the largest sperm whale of which there is record was captured by bark Alaska, of New Bedford, Capt. C. W. Fisher, and yielded 168 barrels and 17 gallons of oil. Upon learning the facts concerning the taking of this leviathan, a representative of the *Mercury* interviewed a number of captains who were known to have been engaged in the whale fishery. Capt. Isaac West, a veteran whaling captain, said the largest sperm whale he ever saw yielded 132 barrels of oil. Capt. David J. Kerby said he once helped take a sperm whale that yielded 156 barrels. Capt. George Clark said the largest whale in his experience yielded 102 barrels. Capt. Anthony said, the largest sperm whale he assisted in taking yielded 130 barrels of oil. It is stated that bark Wave once captured a sperm whale that yielded 108 barrels of oil. Up to the present time this is the largest sperm whale taken on record. There were several different whales taken on the voyage that yielded from 120 to 150 barrels.

A WHALE WITH THE TOOTHACHE.—*Extract from a whaler's Journal*.—Among the ailments to which sperm whales are subject, is the jumping toothache. It operates on the nervous system as it does upon those of mankind, rendering them crabbed and facetious. Just at day-break one morning, while we were cruising on the "off-shore" ground, a violent commotion in the water about two miles ahead, resembling breakers, attracted attention. It continued unabated till within fifty rods of it, when a sperm whale (for such it proved to be) threw his entire body into the air and fell back into his native element with a tremendous report. Of course, the yards were hauled aback, and the boats lowered, but several minutes elapsed before it was deemed prudent to approach the monster. Finding, however, that he had no idea of becoming quiet, we advanced with caution, and succeeded in securing one iron firmly in his back, which rendered him more restless. Giving him plenty of slack line, we removed to a respectful distance; hoping he would sound or retreat, but he was not disposed to do either. So taking our oars we pulled sufficiently near to give the boat header an opportunity to lance him. He seemed to be aware of our intention, for he turned and rushed towards us with the design of giving us a *saiving*, which we narrowly escaped. During the next half hour he chased us, and it was with much difficulty that we avoided him. When near us he turned on his back and raised his jaw, bringing to view two handsome rows of ivory. A terrific object an enraged whale holds a prominent place.

An hour passed in unavailing attempts to accomplish the desired object, the whale becoming more furious, and the hope of conquering him growing fainter. At length, while the attention of the monster was directed towards us, the mate came upon him in an opposite direction, and dealt him a death wound, relieving us of a burden of anxiety, which indicated itself in the pallid countenances and nervous agitation of the boat's crew. He was very reluctant to yield, and the death struggle was long and violent. If a cat has nine lives, as is sometimes remarked, that fellow had nineteen.

Before night his blubber was in the try-pots and his jaw was stripped of its covering. On extracting his teeth, the cause of his singular movement was revealed. The cavities in several contained a large number of worms, an eighth of an inch in length. The teeth were perfectly sound, but the marrow or nerve of the tooth, which was an inch in diameter at the lower extremity, was in many of them entirely consumed by the insects that seem to have bred there.—*Hallowell Gazette*.

ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-TWO BARRELS OF OIL FROM ONE FISH.—In our ship news column will be found a letter from Capt. Fisher, of bark Alaska, giving an account of the capture of a sperm whale yielding upwards of one hundred and sixty barrels of oil. Upon learning the facts concerning the taking of this leviathan, a representative of the *Mercury* sought out some captains who are known to have been engaged in sperm whale fishery. Capt. Isaiah West, a veteran whaling captain, said the largest whale he ever saw yielded 132 barrels of oil. Capt. James E. Stanton said in an experience of forty-five years in whaling, the largest whale he ever saw taken yielded 110 barrels. Capt. David G. Kirby said he once helped take a whale which yielded 156 barrels. Capt. George Clark said the largest whale in his experience yielded 102 barrels. Capt. George S. Anthony said the largest sperm whale he ever assisted in taking yielded 130 barrels. It is stated that the bark Wave once captured a sperm whale which stowed down 161 barrels of oil.—*N. B. Mercury*.

Capt. George W. Allen of this place states: "Sailed in command of bark Mars, from New Bedford, July 1st, 1874. On August 16th, in lat. 45.21, N., lon. 29.11, W., caught a sperm whale that turned up from the cooler 152 barrels, 12 gallons of oil. Capt. Allen, at that time, claimed to having captured the largest sperm whale on record. He was afterwards informed by Messrs. Gifford & Cummings, that they could not ascertain of there having ever been a larger sperm whale captured, and felt he held the palm, but now resigns it to Capt. Fisher, of the Alaska. Capt. Allen also states from record, that he captured six whales during that voyage that averaged 117 barrels of oil each. During his 13 years' services on board the bark Mars, of New Bedford, he captured seventeen whales, which yielded 1902 barrels of sperm oil. Can any one beat that by record?"



## Big Whales.

One of our contemporaries has asked a question concerning big whales, which calls up some very unctuous reminiscences of the "yarns" told by some of the pioneers on the great Northern whaling grounds. Each was anxious to outdo the other in relating the wonders he had met with in those strange regions; and as to the immense size and yield of the great bow-heads or polar whales, there was a positive in-fat-uation on the subject. They could not report the discovery in those hyperborean latitudes of any land flowing with milk and honey, but they testified to a sea flowing with oil, so that the Polar Basin was one vast "slick" throughout its whole extent.

It was generally admitted that all the biggest whales were taken by New Londoners, some of whom even boasted that they had *picked them out!* Whether our Connecticut friends really can select the biggest, as Nelson did the ships of the Spanish fleet at St. Vincent, or whether they had a peculiar system of gauging their casks, this deponent saith not. It is really true that when the Northern whaling grounds were first opened to Yankee enterprise, the whales, having been for ages undisturbed, were very numerous, also that specimens of marvellous size and fatness were met with. Indeed, so many instances are related of single whales yielding as high as 270 to 280 barrels, that we think some of these stories must have been true.

But the great difficulty in determining the exact yield of any particular whale arises from the fact that several whales are taken in close succession, all of them being boiled on a single "fare," so that it was impossible to say where each begun or ended, or how much oil was obtained from each fish. It was a common thing for a whaler to start her fires in the busy season and boil out a *thousand*, or even *two thousand* barrels of oil, without "cooling down." Unless a single whale is taken care of, and the work finished before another is captured, any estimate of the yield of oil, must be mere guess-work.

In the fall of 1849, it was reported that the ship *Junior*, of New Bedford, Capt. Tinkham, had taken a bowhead during her Arctic cruise, which boiled out 316 barrels of oil! We know not whether the log-book of this ship, if it be now in existence, would throw any light upon the subject, but we do know that the statement was published at the time in the *Honolulu Friend*, edited by Rev. S. C. Damon, the seamen's chaplain at that port.

It was reported that the bark *Superior*, of Sag Harbor, Capt. Roys, which made the pioneer whaling cruise to Behring's Straits in 1848, met with a whale which the captain and officers judged was too big to tackle. Not meaning that they were afraid of the whale himself by any means, but they feared the strain upon the ship's mainmast would be too great in rolling him for the purpose of peeling his jacket off! This story also found its way into the *Friend*, but whether Captain Roys himself ever authorized the publication, is a question which we cannot settle.

It is to be understood of course, that it may not necessarily be the largest whale which produces the greatest yield of oil, for there is a wonderful difference in thickness of blubber, as well as in the fatness of different specimens. This great difference is especially observable in the right whale, for it is well known that some individuals of that species, though large in size, will make little or no oil, such being techni-

cally known as "dry-skins." The sperm whale recently taken by a New Bedford whaler in the Atlantic Ocean, yielding 160 barrels, is certainly the largest, or the fattest one of that species, of which we have any record. The story seems, in this instance, to be well authenticated, while many of the accounts of extraordinary flows of oil are too *slippery* to stand upon their own merits.

Feb. 17, 1877

**A BIGGER ONE.**—In answer to our inquiry whether any of our whalers could report a greater yield of oil from one sperm whale than 141 barrels (sent home from ship *Emma C. Jones*), we learn that one was taken by ship *Harvest* of this port, in 1853, which boiled out 167 barrels, though the jaw was not taken in, owing to bad weather. Sixty barrels were obtained from the head. This whale was taken on the homeward passage in the South Atlantic Ocean, (35° S. 45° W., or thereabouts). We have the statement of Capt. William H. Tice, fully confirmed by that of Mr. John Chinery, who was third mate with him in the *Harvest* at the time referred to.

Oct. 21, 1871

**BIG WHALE.**—Ship *Emma C. Jones* of New Bedford, Capt. Gifford, sent home in the bark *Fredonia* 141 barrels of sperm oil, obtained from one whale. Can any of our veteran whalers call to mind a bigger one than this?

Oct. 14, 1871

**CORRECTION.**—By a curious blunder of the types, we were made to say last week that the sperm whale taken by the *Harvest* in 1853, boiled out 167 barrels of oil, when we meant to have said 156 barrels. Like the Yankee who wouldn't tell a lie for one snipe, we humbly confess our errors, and hereby take back eleven barrels. Figures can lie, sometimes.

Oct. 28, 1871

**CURIOSITIES.**—We saw at the shop of Mr. H. A. Hinckley, a few days since, the jaw of a sperm whale captured by Capt. D. G. Barney, of ship *Adeline Gibbs*, of Fairhaven, in the year 1844. The peculiarity of this jaw is the fact that about midway there is a twist or coil, the extreme end forming a perfect hook, supposed to have been done by the whale in fighting when young. It is considered a rare curiosity, and a great many have been to examine it. The teeth are all perfect, and add rather a formidable appearance to the jaw. It was purchased by Mr. Chas. B. Chadwick, who is having it prepared for his cabinet in New York. Mr. C. also has a cane presented to him by Capt. Shubael Clark, made of 365 pieces of cocoa-nut shell, so perfectly fitted and turned as to present the appearance of solid wood. It is a fine piece of workmanship.

Nov. 14, 1860

An officer who belonged to the *Spartan* when the *white whale* was taken, says that in cutting up the monster a harpoon with the letters "S H" on it, was found deeply imbedded. It was very rusty, and must have been there many years.—*Sandwich Observer*.

Aug. 4, 1847

## THE DREADED LEVIATHAN.

Story of a Whale Cow That Was a Veritable Demon of Destruction.

### A FEARFUL REVENGE.

Her Calf Was Killed by Accident and It Goaded Her to Madness.

Only Two Out of a Flotilla of Fifty-two Boats Escaped Her Attack—The Marvellous Speed She Made From Point to Point—She Finally Escaped Without a Scratch.

A widely-known and feared devilfish has its headquarters in the Northern Pacific, mostly along the American coast, especially affecting the Gulf of California. This huge creature is a mammal, one of the great whale family, really a porpoise of medium size and moderate yield of oil. It is a peculiar characteristic of this animal that it seems ever on the alert, scarcely exposing for one moment its broad back above the sea surface when rising to spout, and generally traveling, unlike all its congeners, not upon, but a few feet below, the water. A standing order, among the whalers is never by any chance to injure a calf while the mother lives, since such an act exposes all and sundry near the spot to imminent and violent death. Neglect of this most necessary precaution, or more probably accident, once brought about a calamity that befell a fleet of thirteen American whaling ships.

One bright morning, the whole flo-

?

**THERE SHE BLOWS!**—A whale of the fin-back species was discovered at the South Shore, near the head of Maddequecham valley, on Sunday last, by Mr. Alexander M. Myrick. Meeting Mr. Frederick Crocker, and informing him of the circumstance, a rope was procured and the leviathan secured. Many people visited the spot in the afternoon and on Monday, when there being no facilities for "boiling" on the island (it is hard for us to realize the fact) the carcass was let loose, and drifted off on the next tide.

June 26, 1880

## BIG WHALES.

The harpoon and lance are, with us islanders, things of the past, and the technical words and phrases pertaining to the whale-killing business are becoming obsolescent. But a few of the doughty old seakings still remain among us, who delight to live the past over again in reminiscences, and tell their tales of tough battles fought and victories won, and moving accidents by flood, to the great admiration of strangers as well as of the rising generation.

The yield of oil from some exceptionally large or fat sea-monsters has recently furnished an unctuous subject for comment, but it seems that listeners and readers who are not conversant with the business, need a little more light to mark the distinction between the different species of whales. They say they have heard and read of whales yielding much larger quantities of oil than those noble specimens captured by the Alaska and the Mars.

All this is quite correct, but they must look again to the statements in our former issue, and in the *New Bedford Mercury*, and take notice that the figures given apply to sperm whales, as distinguished from other kinds. A collection of facts relating to the right whale and the Polar whale or "bow-head" might be made, which would carry the reader into much higher mathematics, showing figures nearly double those given as the maximum yield of the sperm-whale.

In the palmy days of whaling in the North Pacific, single individuals of the right whale species yielding two hundred and fifty barrels of oil were by no means uncommon, and quite a number were reported to have exceeded that figure. After the bow-heads were found in such vast numbers in the high Northern latitudes, still more marvellous stories were told of their great size and yield, and these stories were true in the main, though we must allow for some instances of exaggeration.

The *Honolulu Friend* in 1849 published a report from the captain and crew of the ship *Junior*, of New Bedford, that they had captured a polar whale that season in or near Behring's straits, and had obtained from it *three hundred and sixteen* barrels of oil. This is certainly what our compositors would call a "fat take," and the story is a little more oleaginous than any other that we have met with in print, but perhaps some veteran mariner is ready now to beat even that, and if so we are ready to hear from him.

It is a curious fact, and not generally known, except to whalers themselves, that the cow or female whale of the right and polar varieties grows to be rather larger than the male, and gives the greater yield of oil, while all the large sperm whales are males, the female being a comparatively small animal with an average yield of from twenty to thirty barrels. Doubtless there is a good reason for everything that Nature does, but we shall be glad to hear from some one of a philosophical turn of mind, who can answer this question: Why is this thus?



02





## NANTUCKET MEMORIES.

There is here and there in Nantucket a mansion that impresses one as being of the patrician order, as possessed of that indefinable something which marks houses as well as men. The one we have in mind stands on the corner of a principal street, with well-kept lawns and gardens in the rear, a house that has entertained General Grant and President Arthur, with many men distinguished in other walks of life. Its owner is a retired merchant, one of those who forty years ago made this isolated isle known and respected to the remotest corners of the earth. He began his business career in 1832, as shipbuilder, and sent out many craft that were the pride of the seas. In 1839, as our Consul at New Zealand, he threw to the breeze the first American flag ever hoisted there. When the gold fever broke out in 1849 he sent his ship around the Horn to San Francisco, and himself performed the journey overland, enduring all the hardships incident to the way. He owned the first tea ship that entered the port of Foochow after it was opened to commerce in 1854. One of his last ventures, of which a pleasant chapter might be made, was his journey to London and then to Paris in 1855, where he chartered to the French Government the ship *Great Republic*, then the largest vessel in the world, to be used as a transport in the Crimean war. The ship took at one voyage 3,300 horses, with officers and artillery, and earned \$184,000 for her owners in fourteen months.

As may be imagined, the reminiscences of such a man are of the most interesting character; his library would delight a collector, not alone for its printed volumes, but for its relics and manuscripts, old letters, day-books and ledgers of merchants, log-books of whaling ships, parish registers, and records of the old families of the island. A piece of oak wood stained by sea water, lying on his table, attracted our attention during a recent call. "That," said he, "is a piece of the belfry of the good ship *Endeavor*, in which in 1769-70 Captain Cook completed his famous voyage round the world. Some will be surprised to learn that the *Endeavor* finished her career by being broken up in Newport Harbor, her iron and some of her timbers going to build a new sloop; but such was the case. The *Endeavor* had a wonderful history. She was originally built by a French company of Dunkirk, and was employed by them in fishing in the Arctic; at length she was captured by the British and tendered by the Admiralty to Cook for his expedition to the Pacific to observe the transit of Venus. On his return she was sold to a whaling company and employed in their adventurous calling for some years; finally she drifted into the merchant service, and in 1795 brought a miscellaneous cargo from London to Newport, consigned to Gibbs & Channing (George Channing, junior member of this firm, was the father of the famous Dr. Channing). They loaded her with a return cargo and in going out she struck on Brenton's Reef, was taken back and condemned. She lay for years a useless old hulk. Finally she was purchased by Captains John and Stephen Calhoun, hauled out on the flats and broken up. Mr. William Gilpin, of Newport, has or had the crown of the *Endeavor*. Boxes were also constructed from her timbers, some of which were sent to England, and on the publication of Cooper's 'Red Rover' in 1827, several gentlemen of Newport—Robert P. Lee, Nicholas G. Boss, Peleg Clarke, and others—had a box made from her keel, and presented to the novelist in appreciation of his genius. I had some curiosity as to the fate of this box, and so wrote to the novelist's son, Mr. Paul Cooper, who answered as follows:

ALBANY, October, 15, 1874.

"The box you speak of is in my possession. It is plainly, even roughly, made of wood blackened as I suppose by exposure to water. On its top there is a silver plate upon which is engraved a ship seen from the stern, partly, so as to show one side fore-shortened. The stumps of her masts and bowsprit are all that is visible of her rigging—or rather no rigging appears—only the four stumps. She is floating on a moderate sea, not in a storm. Over the ship, in the middle of the length of the plate, is an inscription, thus: 'To the Author of the Red Rover.' The box is oblong and I should think five or six inches in its greatest length. The top opens like that of the ordinary work-boxes used by ladies and the hinges and locks are iron. The inside is plain rough wood. I do not doubt the rough style of the box was intentional."

"Long Tom Coffin, the hero of the *Red Rover*, was a Nantucketer, Reuben Chase by name. I learned this interesting fact from my friend, Charles Deering, of Sag Harbor, the bosom friend of Cooper—they owned ships together—who told me that Cooper told him this fact, and that he had the story of Chase's exploits from Paul Jones himself. It is certain that Chase was with Jones in the *Bon Homme Richard*. He first went to

sea as a whaleman; early in the Revolution he drifted over to Paris, and there met Jones and Dr. Franklin, to whom he was probably known, Franklin having often visited his mother's kindred on the island. Possibly the recommendation of the sinewy whaleman may have influenced Franklin somewhat in procuring Jones his ship. Chase stood six feet four inches in his stockings, and came of a race of island giants. One of his sisters weighed 350 pounds and the other 250. The former was noted for her prowess and feats of strength. For the greater part of her life she kept a boarding house at the foot of Roosevelt street, New York. The gossip told of her overturning in the ditch a cart and load of wood upon it, which an obstinate cartman had left before her door and refused to move.

"We hear a great deal nowadays about reaching the North Pole, yet I'll wager that in this old log-book of 1788 there is a record of a navigator's getting as near as any one ever has, and he only a whaleman with a whaleman's outfit. Under date of June 5, of that year, we read: 'Saw two barks stranded by last gale. Got clear water. Land one whale. One hundred sail in sight. Lat. 78 N.—that is, within twelve degrees of the pole. Seven days later he exceeds this, however, and records 79° 02'. Those early Nantucketers I have sometimes called the foremost men of the earth. Consider some of their exploits. Marine telegraphy was first invented by them in the war of the Revolution. British frigates cruised about the island continually and cut off vessels that sought to make the port. There were four large wind-mills on prominent sand-hills south of the town, and the vanes of these were utilized as signals, those of the east mill denoting when a cruiser was on the northeast of the island and those of the west mill if she was in the west channel. The British captains became so incensed at this manoeuvre that they reported the matter in New York, and a party was sent to burn the 'indicators,' as they were called. A Nantucket merchant, too, and his ships were largely responsible for the famous tea party in Boston Harbor, in 1773. William Rotch was a great merchant here in those days, and in 1773 two of his ships, the *Beaver* and *Dartmouth*, with a third, the *Eleanor*, were chartered by the East India Company to convey cargoes of tea to Boston. December 11, 1773, Rotch was summoned before the Boston Committee, Samuel Adams in the chair, and commanded to return the teas in the same vessels that brought them over, without paying duty, as you have doubtless read in the account of that affair. I have proof that the East India Company paid Rotch the freightage on those teas. It's a pity that the life of this great Quaker merchant could not be fully written; it would make a volume of surpassing interest. He died in 1828, aged ninety-four years."

"Dr. Franklin's mother and grandmother were residents of the island, and I suspect a good share of his mother wit and sound sense were due to Nantucket sea-breezes and nitrogenous food. Here is the record of his mother's birth: 'Abiah, daughter of Peter Folger, born August 15, 1667.' She was of the same family that produced the late Judge Folger. Quite a romance attaches to her mother Mary Moriel, the wife of Peter Folger. She was a maid-servant in the family of the Rev. Hugh Peters, one of Cromwell's chaplains, and in 1662 accompanied her master and his family to the New World. Peter Folger was a passenger on the same vessel, and became so enamored of the maid, that he bought her indenture of her master for £20, an enormous sum in those days, and on landing, married her. Dr. Franklin often visited his mother's relatives on the island, and kept up a correspondence with them. Here is one of his letters to a female cousin here:

LONDON, August 29, 1769.

"'LOVING COUSIN: I had the pleasure of hearing yesterday on inquiry of our cousin Folger that you and your husband and daughter were well when he was last on the island. I recollect that when I sent you the Sliding Plate, I receiv'd a Dollar more than it came to, which I thought to have settled when I should send you the last Plates, but as that Perhaps was omitted after I came away, and I know not whether the Plates were ever made or not, I send you herewith a pair of very nice snuffers in some sort to balance that. They cost six shilling sterling, which is a little more than the Dollar. Seeing some very neat candle-sticks where I bought the snuffers, with a pretty contrivance to push up from the bottom, I bought some for my wife and a pair I send you, which I pray you to accept as a token of my regard."

"The letter is addressed to Mrs. Keziah Coffin, the wife of John Coffin, a great merchant of those days. The candlesticks and snuffers were preserved in the village until destroyed in the great fire of 1846.

"Here is another letter from Franklin, showing his attention to small things:

"PHILADELPHIA, March 24, 1757.

"DEAR SIR: I enclose you some of the grain called whisk corn or broom corn. It must be planted in hills like Indian corn three or four grains in a hill. It looks like Indian corn when growing till the top comes out, of which they make the brushes for velvet and other brooms. The grain is good for bread and for fowls, horses, etc., being a kind of millet, and of great increase. The stalks, etc., make excellent thatch. It grows ten feet high, and I believe must have a little more room than you commonly give your Indian corn, but plant it at the same time. When 'tis ripe gather it. You may strip the seed off by hand from the whisk, or your fowls will pick it off. Give my dear friend Katy enough of the tops to make a whisk for her mantlelet, and with it, if you please, a kiss from me and my best wishes. My respectful compliments to Mrs. W. and other friends. I expect to sail next week for England, where if I can be of any service to you, favor me with your commands, directed to me at the Pennsylvania Coffee-house, in Bristol Lane, London."

"Perhaps you would like to copy this epiphon on himself, written by the philosopher, though it is familiar:

"The body of Benjamin Franklin, Printer, Like the cover of an old book, its contents torn out, and stript of its Lettering and Gilding, lies here food for worms. But the work shall not be lost. It will, as he believes, appear once more in a new and beautiful edition, corrected and amended by the Author. He was born Jan. 6, 1706, and died 17—."

This is a copy, but the original, in Franklin's handwriting is preserved in the village.

The Folgers, Franklin's mother's family, were a notable race of captains and merchants. Capt. Martin Folger was the first to discover the mutineers of the *Bounty* on Pitcairn's Island in 1808. The Coffins and Rotchs, too, were famous in the same way. John Coffin, husband of Keziah, was one of the greatest merchants of his day, exceeded, perhaps, only by William Rotch. Capt. Daniel Coffin carried the first cargo of cotton in bulk to Liverpool in 1790—before that it had been carried only in small lots as samples. Isaac Coffin, of this family, rose to be Sir Isaac Coffin, Bart., Admiral in the British navy. One of William Rotch's ships, the *Bedford*, companion of the *Beaver*, was the first to fly the stars and stripes in an English port. She arrived in London February 13, 1783, and caused the Treasury officials no little perplexity as to how to treat the flag."

C. B. T.

[NOTE.—The person spoken of as consul at New Zealand was not consul, but under commission from Mr. Forsyth, secretary of state at that time, established James R. Clendon first consul of the United States, which event was properly celebrated. Sir Francis Baxter, of France, a cousin of some of our townsmen, was present.

A writer in the New York *Evening Post* corrects some of the statements above made, saying the *Dartmouth* was not a Nantucket ship, but of the port of Dartmouth (now New Bedford). The life of William Rotch was fully written by himself in 1814.—Eds.]

## JANUARY 23, 1886.

### WHALE STORIES.

Among the news items of the day, we read of a steamer on the Pacific coast having run upon a whale. In backing off from the collision, the sea-monster managed to become hopelessly entangled in the machinery of the propeller, and being unable to struggle himself free was actually crushed and killed. Some of our superannuated mariners will shake their wise heads and smile, and talk about "fish stories" and "yarns for the marines." But we are told that the story is vouched for by the captain and crew of the steamer, and really when we consider the situation there is nothing so very Munchausenish about it. It is not a case likely to occur every day, or even once a week, but the incidents are such as might happen naturally enough under the circumstances, and it is certainly much more credible than the account of the whale that swallowed the prophet Jonah, entertained him in his stomach for three days and nights and then threw him out upon *terra firma*, which all good people are expected to swallow entire at a single gulp.

It is not very long since we were surprised with the statement of the captain, crew and passengers of a large iron steamship, running between New York and a southern port, that while under full headway she had actually bisected two large sperm whales without injury to the ship and almost without slackening her speed. It is not easy for men of old-fashioned ideas to credit this story, but when we fully realize the form, size, strength and momentum of such a ship, with her sharp iron cutwater moving at a speed of fifteen or sixteen miles an hour, we are compelled to admit that certain causes will and must produce certain effects, and that even the cutting in two of these immense animals involved no violation of natural and mechanical laws.

We remember having read some years since of a fishing schooner which had been taken in tow, and quite involuntarily too, by a right whale on the Banks of Newfoundland. It was a curious incident, but there was nothing so very strange about it after all. The vessel's anchor being down, the whale in his progress across her bows had caught the bight of the chain in his mouth, and the chain having probably become entangled among the *laminae* or plates of bone in the mouth, which may be compared to the teeth of an immense comb, had dragged the anchor, schooner and all for a considerable distance before he could tear himself free. No doubt the whale was more hurt than the fishermen, and quite as badly frightened.

The annals of the whale fishery contain many instances of shipwreck and of partial damage, more or less serious, to vessels by contact with whales. In the well-known cases of the *Essex* of this port in 1821, and the *Ann Alexander* of New Bedford in 1851, the whale appears to have acted intentionally and with malice prepense, as the lawyers have it, but as a general rule the collisions appear to have been quite accidental. We know that coming in contact with a whale may disable and sink a ship, as was the case with the *Union* of this port in 1807, and a certain or an uncertain percentage of those which have been reported only as "missing" may have met their doom in a similar manner. It is only in recent years that we have heard of a sharp, wedge-like iron prow splitting a whale in twain, and a steam-propeller cracking his bones and crushing out his life-blood, but why should not such an incident occur now and then?

It is curious to observe how many people, like the old lady in the story, accepting the rivers of rum in the West Indies, but protesting against the flying-fish, find it easier to believe old tales than new. Thus they entertain a kind of cloudy faith in the great Kraken of the deep, with its terrible arms stretched forth to draw vessels down to destruction, as depicted in some vile but venerable wood-cut, hallowed by old memories, but have no patience with the latest description of the sea-serpent, however well authenticated. They look kindly back through the mists of time at the mendacious narratives of old travellers, and give them the full benefit of every doubt, but they hold Jack Jones square up to his affidavit, and even flatly charge him with perjury afterwards. Truth should be none the less credible or valuable, because it is sometimes stranger than fiction.

Oct. 24, 1885



# REMINISCENCES.

Whalers---Oil and Candle Works---Mechanical Trades.

NUMBER TWO.

During the year 1830 twenty-one whalers sailed from this port, the greater part of them for the Pacific Ocean, sperm whaling, and the rest for the "Brazil Banks." Only six of the whole number were absent over three years, and the quantity of oil brought in by them amounted to 29,049 barrels of sperm, and 12,659 barrels of whale. The amount of bone brought home in those days was hardly made any account of, as it possessed but little value, while to-day it is the most valuable part of a right whaler's cargo. The importation of so large a quantity of oil, the greater part of which was manufactured here, kept the oil and candle factories in full blast, and scores of men were employed in them: oftentimes two gaugs, running night and day. These candle factories were scattered all over town, most of the principal ship owners having their own, while many others were carried on by those who purchased crude oil, and then manufactured it for the various markets abroad. Among the ones which I best remember, were those of Aaron Mitchell, Matthew Crosby, Levi Starbuck, Gideon Folger, Joseph Starbuck, P. H. Folger, Thomas Macy, Hadwen & Barney, Jared Coffin, Prince & Benjamin Gardner and Paul Macy. Not only was business driving in the manufacture of oils, but in every mechanical business connected with the fitting out of whaleships. Coopers' shops were having full swing all over town, most of their owners at that day having them near their dwelling houses, they not being, as in latter years, all crowded near the wharves. They were as far north as North shore hill, and west to Aaron Folger's, which was, I believe, the most western cooper's shop. The merry rattle of the hammer and driver could be heard in any part of the town, from early morning until late in the evening, and loads of staves, heading and hoop iron were constantly passing from the wharves to the shops, and new casks being taken to the vessels. How many of these shops were in active operation at that time it is now impossible to tell, or the number of hands that were employed in them; but it would certainly surprise us at this time could we know their numbers.

The building of boats was another great branch of industry connected with the whaling business, as six or eight were carried away by every ship that sailed. The shops for the building of these boats were generally near the water, although some of them were far removed from it, as were those of Charles Folger, and George & Reuben Coffin at the "Big Shop," at both of which places great numbers of very excellent boats were built, and carted to the wharves.

The making of harpoons, lances, spades, knives and the thousand-and-one articles taken away on our whalers, kept a large force of blacksmiths always at work. Their shops were as a general thing strung along the streets just at the head of the wharves, and were mostly low, dingy-looking buildings, but were lighted up within by the bright fires from the forges, showing hanging on racks along their sides rows of implements of all kinds, for the capture and cutting up of leviathan.

The manufacture of cordage was also carried on to a great extent, no less than eight ropewalks being in operation. About all the cordage used by our whalers and coasting vessels was then manufactured on the island, employing about twenty-five men to each ropewalk, making all kinds of rope, from a single yarn to a cable, for most of our ships used cables of hemp, those of chain being then quite rare. I remember well seeing the string of carts loaded with the huge coils of these unwieldy monsters,

going down Main street from the walks of Matthew Myrick, Isaac Myrick, and Albert Gardner, west of the town, conveying them to the ships at our wharves. One cart would be loaded to its full capacity, then the cable was passed to the next team, and so on until the whole was loaded, taking, as near I can remember, as many as five carts, to convey one. The walks of Matthew Myrick, Isaac Myrick, Charles Hussey and Valentine Bunker stood just west of the Prospect Hill cemetery; that of Albert Gardner, at the head of Main street, on what is now the Lowell lot; that of Henry Riddell, opposite the Springfield House, on North Water street, on the land now owned by Elijah H. Alley; that of Gardner Coffin, east of the Cliff bathing houses, and the Carey walk, lastly owned by Joseph James, where the great fire of 1838 originated, east of Union, and south of Coffin streets. In addition to these there were two twine factories, one in Egypt and the other on the South beach. With the exception of a small piece of the Isaac Myrick walk, used as a barn, I do not know of a vestige of either of them left. Russia hemp was then the only article used in the manufacture of cables and rigging of all kinds, the Manila hemp not coming into use until some years later. The manufacture of sails, the making of spars, blocks, and other articles for our shipping, were other branches of industry employing a large number of men. All other branches of mechanical labor flourished on the island, and scores of carpenters, painters, wheelwrights, candle-box makers, bakers, tailors, &c., had full employment. There was work for every man then who wanted work, and when the old South bell rung out the hour of noon, Main street, as well as the other streets leading up from the wharves, were filled with an army of workmen going up for their dinners, presenting a sight, the like of which I fear we shall never look upon again.

From this hasty and imperfect sketch, some idea may be formed of the vast amount of mechanical business there was carried on at that time, the great amount of capital invested, and the host of men and boys employed in the manufacture of some of the leading articles used on board our fleet of whalers and coasting vessels sailing from Nantucket half a century ago.

1830.

June 24, 1880

## THE OLD WHALING DAYS.

We read now among the items of marine news, that the steamer "High-Killer" has started out on another short cruise along our coast in search of whales, and we are told of how many guns her armament consists, as if she were a man-of-war or a privateer. This is indeed an improvement on the old way of doing business, and we must admit that for whaling as well as for other sea-voyages steam has the advantage over canvas, even as the gun is superior for the purpose of a weapon to the ancient spear and javelin. Of course any and all species of cetacea are available game for our armed steamer, and even the ubiquitous fin backs which were accustomed to laugh defiance at the old-time whaler, are now slaughtered in considerable numbers. Be it remembered, by the way, that we of this ilk borrowed or hired a specimen last summer as a show for the summer visitors who were more than satisfied with the entertainment afforded by it.

We can no longer claim to be experts in such matters, for we have laid aside the old armor and have never buckled on the new. But the mention of a raid with steam and gunpowder upon the poor fin-backs in our own waters suggests, by way of contrast, the long and adventurous voyages of our youth when we signed articles to cruise for whales "in the Pacific Ocean

or elsewhere," which surely was comprehensive enough, being equivalent to a roving commission. At the time when the writer first ventured to sea in 1841, there were ninety whalers owned and registered at the port of Nantucket. With the exception of three or four small craft these were all ships of goodly size, and no less than twenty-eight were fitted out and sailed during that year. Sperm whaling was a speciality with us, and we expected to be absent from home, or rather to make our home on the ocean, for about four years, unless by special good fortune we should fill up sooner. Indeed we had at that date come to regard the spermaceti whale as the only prize worthy of our effort, and looked down upon all others from a respectful distance. We might be tempted to attack a right whale if we met one while making passages, but if the breeze was fair, and some delay was to be made, even this was done under protest. As to fin backs that were met with in all latitudes they were quite beneath contempt; indeed they might be called sour grapes in both senses of the phrase, being very difficult to catch, and worth but little when caught, for we had not yet reached the era of steam and explosives, as applied to our business,—we knew no better weapon than the sharp harpoon and lance driven by the strong arm.

We were conversing the other day with an ancient mariner, who was one of the crew of a Nantucket ship which went up the North-West coast of America as early as 1836, extending her voyage nearly to the Kodiak Peninsula, but as no sperm whales were discovered, she turned back to the southward again. Countless numbers of right whales of immense magnitude were in sight day after day, yet no attempt was made to capture any of these. A few weeks' work would have been sufficient to fill that small ship, but she returned after a long voyage with a partial cargo of sperm oil, and some room to spare in her hold. A few years later scores of ships from other ports annually visited the locality, and rich returns were made.

Whaling is with us a thing of the past, a something to be talked about only by garrulous old fellows who have nothing better to do than to live over their young lives in memory and reminiscence. We had always supposed that the fin back, as a rule, would be allowed to roam the seas undisturbed, but the comparative scarcity of the more valuable species and the great improvements in whale-killing appliances, have combined to pronounce his doom. Man will assert his dominion over all the beasts of the sea, as well as of the field, and will establish his empire, whether by cold steel, dynamite, electricity, steam or chloroform. Meanwhile we superannuated Nantucketers of the old school can only look on, read and wonder,—and tell over old tales.

Nov. 28, 1885

NANTUCKET'S RANK AMONG THE WHALING PORTS.—An article upon "The Whaling Business of Lynn," appears in a recent issue of the *Lynn Transcript*, in which the writer makes some grave errors of fact, no doubt from want of knowledge concerning the statistics of the business as carried on from other ports. He says:

"Between 1835 and '40 New Bedford, always the leading whaling port of this country, had more than one hundred vessels constantly employed. It may be added that it still is the largest; and the shrinkage of the business can be measured by the fact that at present, and for many years, it is believed that not more than twenty of its vessels have continued the search for whales. New London, at the mouth of the Thames River, in Connecticut, and Sag Harbor, on Long Island, had the next largest interest in the enterprise, each of them it is believed, having about seventy-five craft engaged in the business. Nantucket, whose fame and prosperity was, so to say, built upon the whale, always had fewer,—at the most about fifty vessels."

We believe that New Bedford still fits out about one hundred vessels, instead of twenty as stated by the *Transcript*, though the shrinkage has been very great, as when the whaling business was at its height that city, with the little port of Fairhaven opposite, sent out upwards of three hundred vessels, most of which were full-rigged ships or barks of large size. This was in the early years of the decade, between 1850 and 1860, when the whole American whaling fleet numbered from six to seven hundred vessels.

In the relative position given to Nantucket as compared with New London and Sag Harbor, the *Transcript* writer is entirely mistaken. Nantucket was in days of yore, the very parent and leading representative of the business in America, and in this sense may even be said to have been the mother of New Bedford, though it is true that the child outgrew the parent in later years. More than a century ago, before the Revolutionary war, Nantucket had a fleet of one hundred and fifty vessels, which were mostly brigs and schooners large enough for the comparatively short voyages then made in the Atlantic Ocean.

After that date there were various ups and downs occasioned by wars and other causes, but at about the time when Lynn gave up the whaling business, or in 1840, we were sending out a fleet of ninety vessels from this port, nearly all of which were large ones for making voyages to the Pacific Ocean. At a later period it is true that New London and Sag Harbor led us in the business, for their fleets were increased after ours had begun to decline.

The writer urges as first among the reasons for the decline of the business, that the whales became scarce and shy, and says:

"It is believed that they retreated into the Ochotsk Sea, near Kamchatka, and the vessels engaged in the business were too small, and old, and weak to be serviceable at such a distance, and it did not pay to follow the game by building bigger ones."

Now, the writer evidently does not know that it is only a certain species as the polar and right whales that live in that sea at all, and that the sperm whale, which pervades the whole expanse of the open ocean to a greater or less extent, being at home both in high and low latitudes, never goes into the Ochotsk Sea. As to the size or strength of the vessels being a reason for discontinuing the business of whaling anywhere, there could be no greater mistake, for the best, and strongest of vessels have been built by hundreds to pursue the whale into his most distant and secret haunts in every part of the ocean. The other reasons assigned for the decline, such as the California exodus, and the introduction of gas and petroleum are all correct and well urged, but the writer should have consulted some authority, such as Starbuck's History of the Whale Fishery, before he ventured upon statistical statements, or gave to different whaling ports their comparative positions in the list.

Aug. 12, 1882



## Whaling off Cape Horn.

BY W. H. MACY.

Few people—not even mariners in other branches of sea service—have any idea of the perils incurred by the whaleman in the line of his profession. He alone can be said to “go down to the sea in ships,” while other seamen only skim across it; of him alone can it be declared that, in a literal sense, he “does business on the great waters.”

We had been thirty days to the southward of that stormy headland, Cape Horn, vainly endeavoring to make our way into the Pacific, against a succession of westerly gales, which had kept us most of the time under storm canvas. We had stretched away up into the latitude of fifty-nine, and our good ship had struggled, and wallowed, and tumbled about, hardly holding her own, until at last a slant of wind enabled us to lay a course that would carry us, if we were able to continue it, well clear of the land and down into milder latitudes. For the first time in many days, we had set whole topsails, caught a glimpse of sunshine, and manned the mastheads. The men had not been aloft an hour, when we were electrified with the thrilling cry of, “There she breaches!” A few minutes sufficed to determine the fact that the breach was made by a spermaceti of the largest class. It is not uncommon to meet with sperm whales in high southern latitudes, for this species is found anywhere in deep water, without regard to climate or temperature.

Rugged as was the sea at the time, and uncertain as was the continuance of fair weather, the main object of the voyage must be pursued at any risk. If a whale was in sight, we must lower and try him, as long as a boat could brave the sea. So down went our three boats, as soon as the maintop-sail was thrown aback to deaden her way. The whale, which was one of those patriarchal old “sogs,” generally found cruising alone, was going slowly to leeward, leisurely blowing the low bushy cloud of white mist from his spiracle at intervals of a few seconds, and seeming entirely unconscious of any danger until the waistboat, in which I pulled the tub-oar, was shooting down upon the declivity of a wave, right abreast of his hump, within short darting distance. Westcott, the boat-steerer, jumped to his feet; the second mate gave a heave of the steering-oar at the same moment, and the boat struck her stem smartly against the broadside of the whale, with a shock that nearly threw the boat-steerer from his unsteady footing. But nothing daunted he buried his first iron to the socket in the body of the monster, and recovering himself, also gave him the second one though not so deeply. By this time we were half drowned with the chilly brine, the whale heaving his “small” and his immense flukes in the air close to our heads as he pitched to go down, and sweeping two oars out of the rowlocks as he did so. The bowman had the breath temporarily knocked out of him by the loom of his oar striking him in the chest; but the whale was gone, and our line running swiftly through the chocks in less time than it would take to tell the story. Nobody was seriously injured, and Mr. Dennis, full of enthusiasm and anxiety to secure the first whale of the voyage for his boat, shifted ends and got his lance clear. The other two boats were now doing their best to reinforce us, but must await the next rising of the whale before they could fasten.

It was so rugged that every send of the boat into the sea threw a torrent of water in over the gunwales, compelling Westcott to slack line to ease the strain, and the after-oarsman to ply his bucket almost continually in bailing. Three of us in the boat were green hands, and our first initiation into the art and mystery of whaling was attended with more peril than we were really aware of at the moment.

The whale took out about two-thirds of the line from our tub, when the strain was suddenly relaxed, and we were ordered to haul in again. The line, besides being cold and wet, was new and wiry, and the operation of carefully coiling it down in the stern-sheets was one of some difficulty. Our consorts had now pulled ahead to the spot where they expected the whale to rise, but suddenly some one cried, “There he is!” and sure enough, the monster broke water nearly half a mile off, pushing half his body into the air in his agony.

“We are loose, then!” said Mr. Dennis, in a tone of vexation. “Bear a hand, boys, and gather in this stray line.”

The other boats would now have the start of us, as they went on in pursuit, while we were delayed in taking care of our line. The loss of the whale was soon explained, when on hauling in, we found the first iron broken off at the socket. When the strain shifted to the second one, it had drawn out, not having been so deeply entered as the other.

“Pull ahead!” cried Mr. Dennis, as soon as he had the broken iron in hand. “We’re two oars short—never mind, shift the after oar to the bow thwart, and man three oars—the others take your paddles. Bend on another iron, Westcott, as fast as you can.”

“There’s a signal at the ship’s mizzen-peak,” said I. “What does that mean?”

Mr. Dennis glanced to windward. “It means—Give up the chase and get on board—and it’s high time, too. Look there!”

The appearance of the sky in the direction of his hand, was enough to explain his meaning, in language that all of us understood. A double-headed Cape Horn squall was coming down upon us; such a one as makes everything crack again, while the accompanying hail cuts the flesh like little stones.

The ship had already hoisted the signal of recall, and put her helm up to come to her boats. The third mate had seen the signal even before we did, as our attention had been more diverted, and in the excitement of the time being, we had not looked to windward. As the ship fell off before it, she forged quickly, nearing us at a great rate of speed, though the topsails were settled down on the lifts and the reef-tackle hauled out, an operation termed by seamen, “Spanish-reefing.” We had nothing to do but lie snug and wait for the ship to come to us. To attempt pulling to windward in such a sea would be sheer folly.

But rapidly as the good ship came down to our rescue, the squall was too quick even for her. When it burst upon us, it wrapped everything from view, and for a time, we knew not where the ship was nor where we were ourselves. To keep the boat headed up to the sea and prevent her swamping, required all the thought and skill of the officer at the steering-oar; while crouching down under the fierce blast, with the hail seeming to cut to the bone, we labored with the buckets, in this dreadful noonday darkness, to keep her free of water. For ten or fifteen minutes it was utterly impossible to look to any point of the compass; then the blast, with its hail, had passed

over, leaving a strong gale of wind, such as may be called the normal weather of this wild region. As the sky cleared, we saw the ship in fearful proximity to us, and driving steadily on as if she meant to “give us the stem” with no more compunction than she would have shown in attacking a Malay pirate. We were barely in time to escape destruction by a few lusty strokes of the oars, and a change of the ship’s course, as she discovered us and luffed to. By this manoeuvre we were brought directly under her lee, and had our warp thrown on board before she had deadened her headway. She came flying up into the wind with topsails on the cap, and jib slatting fearfully at the boom-end, for with the few shipkeepers, they had been too short-handed to secure any of the canvas. It required some dexterity and skilful management to get a boat hooked on and run up to the davits in so rugged a sea; but this was accomplished without serious accident, and we went directly from this work to our stations aloft furling the fore and mizzen-topsails. While on the yards we could see the other two boats, which were a mile and a half to leeward, riding by a sort of floating anchor, made of their oars lashed together, by which means they were kept head to the wind and sea. Having got things a little more manageable aloft, we swung her off again, sending some hands to stow the jib while it was becalmed before the wind.

The operation of picking up our boats was a delicate one and attended with no little danger. Nice judgment is required in a gale of wind with a large sea on, to luff to at exactly the right moment, and equally nice work on the part of those in the boat to bring her handsomely alongside. We were quite successful with the larboard boat, manning the falls and running her into the air so quickly when the word was given, that she had no chance to lift on the next roll of the ship. But to attempt to hoist the starboard boat on the weather side would be madness, and the captain decided to wear round before taking her up.

A wave of the hand was understood by the third mate as a signal for him to run to leeward, while this manoeuvre was being executed. He had no need of either sail or oars to propel his light boat; he had enough to do at the steering-oar to keep her straight before the wind and sea, and let her drive swiftly on, keeping two men ready with balers to save her from foundering. The operation of wearing ship was quickly performed, and the old Iris was brought on the port tack as skilfully as before, the boat rounding in snugly under our lee. But we were not so fortunate in hoisting her up. At the word “Fore and aft!” a run was made with one tackle-fall, but the other caught foul so that the two ends of the boat rose unequally, and a heavy lurch of the ship brought the forward end down heavily, unhooking the tackle. As she rose again, the boat was lifted by one end, and the iron hoisting-strap, not so strong as it should have been, broke off at the neck. “Save the men!” was the cry, “Never mind the boat!” Our whole interest centred in the safety of the two men who were hooking on. The third mate, however, had already got a hold on the mizzen-chains and was safe, while the Portuguese boatsteerer, Antone, had clung to the running parts of the fall when his tackle unhooked, and was now *shinning* for dear life. A dozen strong arms were ready over the rail to assist him, and a “hurrah!” went up when he was dragged in on the quarter-deck, exhausted with his fright and his struggles, but unhurt.

Away went our starboard boat—a new one, which had been that day in active service for the first time—dancing buoyantly off on the crest of the waves for a minute or two, when a comber filled her to the thwarts, and her heavier movements were soon hidden from our view. It was no time to fret over the loss of one boat. All our lives were safe for the time being, and we had enough to do to bring the ship down to short storm canvas, and make all snug for a strong steady gale. It is at such moments, after narrow escapes, that the seaman has abundant reason to feel his own nothingness, and to realize his absolute dependence upon the mercy of Heaven.

But as if to tantalize us still more, while we were aloft close-reefing the main-topsail, our immense sperm whale which had escaped by the breaking of the harpoon in his body, rose within a quarter of a mile in full view, and started to windward, lashing the sea in his agony into a very chaos of foam, tinged with his life-blood. We watched him for some time after we had shortened sail, for his progress was slow, and the sight seemed to make our captain and the other old whalers almost insane with excitement. But to have lowered again in pursuit of him would have been madness, the risk was too great to be thought of.

“Sour grapes!” muttered the mate, gloomily, as he turned away to his duty.

“Here we have lost a bran-fire new boat, and an iron, and just saved our lives by the skin of our teeth, and are no richer in pocket for it. We have killed a big whale—for he is sure to die of the wound—and he will do nobody any good. And now we may as well make out our log for another week’s beating and banging, trying to get round the corner.

*Go below, the watch!”*

*—Bailou’s Monthly for September.*

SEPTEMBER 30,

1876.

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## The Mystery of Shubael Wyer.

BY W. H. MACY.

Those who now visit the little island of Nantucket for aquatic sport and recreation during the heated term, can scarcely imagine the place to have been the mart of industry that it was forty years ago. In the days of my boyhood, we had never heard of such innovations as water-pipes under our streets, or a narrow-gauge railroad along our sea-shore to meet the requirements of elegant leisure or to carry on the work of active idleness. But our well-kept wharves were then lined with stout ships, arriving from and departing upon long voyages, while the fleet of fore-and-afters in the coasting trade far exceeded in number the fleet of little pleasure boats which now, with the exception of a solitary steamer, are the only craft that vex the waters of our harbor. The boys, in those days, took to the water as naturally as ducks, and many of us became practical boatmen before we were stout enough to get a berth for a voyage round Cape Horn. Half a dozen of us "North-Shorers," who were sworn friends and comrades in all sorts of aquatic adventure, had scraped our united savings into a common stock and bought an old whale-boat for a few dollars, and by hook or by crook, had picked up a complement of old oars for her.

The Sea-Shell—for she answered to that name in large Roman capitals rudely done in red chalk both upon her bow and quarter—had made a voyage quite round the globe before she came into our ownership, and had encountered some hard knocks in her many battles with leviathan. But scarred and patched as she was, no champions of Harvard or Yale were ever more proud of their gaudy craft on a racing day than we were of the Sea-Shell when we pulled away out beyond the bar to test her qualities in a sea-way, and pulled all the way back again with hungry stomachs and blistered hands, declaring that she was the most perfect sea-boat that ever swam, and as to her leaking, why one boy could keep her free and not bail more than half the time. Many were the cruises we made up harbor in this old boat, often visiting the old hut of Abraham Quady, the half-breed who was the last descendant of the once powerful Nantucket tribe.

But even Abraham himself, possessing as he did the strongly marked characteristics of the Indian race, was not invested with more interest in our juvenile minds than was old Shubael Wyer, the hermit of Coatue. It was plain enough to us that Shubael was of our own Caucasian stock, and it was even said that he had some near relatives in town, but they never talked of relationship, while he himself avoided the haunts of men and seldom went out of the sight of his own queer little home. We could never have any words with him, for as often as we appeared we were warned off by gestures unmistakable, showing that no communication was desired, and the sinister appearance of the man, added to the fact that he never stirred abroad without a gun or a long heavy rake for digging quahaugs, usually carrying both, was sufficient to enforce his warning and keep boys hovering off at a respectful distance.

We could make him out a tall, cadaverous, wary-looking old man, with an aquiline cast of countenance, and heavy gray beard. In the summer-time, the season when our visits that way were most frequent, we always saw him in his shirt-sleeves, with his gaunt arms bared to the shoulders, and his grizzly head topped by a broad Payta hat or a slouched Sou'wester, according as the weather might be sunny or overcast. Often when cruising around

the point or lying on our oars, we heard the crack of his fowling piece in the distance; at least we always gave him credit for all the shots we heard fired, for no one ever poached upon his manor, and he had become, so far as a certain extent of beach was concerned, a sort of Selkirk, "monarch of all he surveyed." We thought Coatue Point was about the last place that any civilized man should have chosen for a dwelling, but that was his own affair, and if our parents knew anything of the man's past history, they did not choose to be communicative to the younger members of the family.

Shubael's shanty in which he dwelt, though not commodious in size, looked as if it might be comfortable enough. I used to think that to see the interior of it I would have given anything I possessed, except, perhaps, my undivided fractional interest in the Sea-Shell. Old Wyer had a small dory or skiff of his own in which he came across the harbor to town when necessary, to purchase supplies; but this was very seldom, for he picked up most of his living from the sea, the air and the sands of the beach, and would purchase enough at one of his visits to last him for a considerable period. He paid for everything in gold, gave brief and cold answers to all questions, wasted no words, and never asked for aid or charity from any man or woman. He was surly and rude to all who came near his hermitage to gratify curiosity, and gave every one to understand that he desired to be left entirely alone.

Of course it seemed to us boys that he must have lived in this manner from time immemorial, and might still continue to do so for another century; but the real fact was that this crusoe life covered only the last twenty years of Shubael Wyer's earthly career. And at last, one day, when we were out in the Sea-Shell,—that was when I was fourteen, the last summer before I shipped for my first Cape-Horn voyage,—on approaching Coatue Point, we saw some one on the beach near the shanty, making the most frantic signals for us to draw near, but the figure was not that of old Wyer himself. Obeying the call, we ventured in, and soon made it out to be Harvey Burgess, a young man well known to us all. He explained that old Wyer was lying in his house stricken down with paralysis, and urged us to pull for the town as fast as possible. He did not think much could be done even by old Doctor Bartlett with all his reputed skill, for it seemed to be a death stroke with the old hermit, but at any rate no time was to be lost. He, Burgess, had come over to Coatue on a gunning cruise, and it was by the merest accident that he had learned the truth. His own skiff was a long way further up the point, where he had first landed, and besides with our whale-boat and full crew we could make much greater haste, while he himself would remain with the helpless man until the doctor's arrival.

We waited no second bidding, for our generous sympathies lent strength to our young muscles. A human being, even though it was old Shubael Wyer, was in need of medical aid, and the Sea-Shell had never skimmed the smooth waters of the harbor more swiftly since her boy owners rowed her, than she did on that morning.

When she touched the dock I jumped ashore and ran at full speed for Dr. Bartlett's house, while my companions remained by the boat ready for a start. I was lucky enough to find the doctor at home, and in a very few minutes we were on our return; but although doing our very best, Death had not delayed his work to await our coming. The old physician at a glance and a touch pronounced the patient to be quite dead.

"But a little sooner or later would have made no difference," he said. "He was probably beyond any skill of mine even when you first discovered him. By the way, how did it happen? For I think it was seldom that any person but Wyer himself ever entered this door."

"Why, I was shooting about here, and it struck me as a little queer that I did not see the hermit abroad with his gun as he always had been before at that hour, and it occurred to me that perhaps he might be ailing in some way, and I ventured to come and try the door of the shanty. I found him here on his bed, alive, but looking very much as he does now, and he has shown no signs of consciousness at any moment since."

"And now, doctor," continued Burgess, "do you know anything of his history? Of course he is a puzzle to all the young folks, though it is said that he is a native and has relatives here."

"So he has," replied the doctor. "But he hasn't troubled himself about them for many years, nor they about him. I knew Shubael Wyer when he was a smart young man, and he commanded a ship when about twenty-six years old, but I know nothing of the middle period of his life, and cannot say why he came here to bury himself in a desert. I have had some surmises on the subject, but don't know anything that I would care to put into words. If you will stay a while with the body, Mr. Burgess, I'll employ these lads to take me back to town, and I will then report to the coroner, and also notify some of Wyer's relatives."

The scene in the shanty that day left a strong impression which was anything but a pleasant one upon my memory. The romance connected with its interior where I had so long desired to get a peep was now quite dissipated, for everything was so common and insignificant, to say nothing of the disorder and dirt. But there was a stove in which there had been a fire that morning, and there were provisions in the house, so that nothing indicated want or distress, and it would seem that the hermit had always lived comfortably enough in his way. But the principal object that fascinated me was the old man lying there in a half-doubled-up attitude, with the tangled hair and beard partially masking the distorted features of the face. He was dressed as if ready to start out, and everything showed that he had risen that morning in his usual health, and been suddenly stricken down. There was a kind of hideous attraction about the scene, from which it seemed an effort to tear myself away, and yet I was not sorry to breathe the outer air and to be again afloat on our return.

That night at dusk when we made fast the Sea-Shell at her moorings, I lingered on the wharf for a yarn with old Zimri Clark, the watchman, who had just come on duty for the night. Uncle Zimri was a veteran mariner who had had his share of beating the seas from Cape Horn to Kamtschatka in the days of his youth, but was hale, hearty and alert at three-score-and-ten. He was always ready with some story of adventure such as boys delight in, and did not mind beguiling the time in that way while he guarded the property on the wharf against fire and night prowlers. Thus I often used to walk back and forth with him for an hour or two, keeping close to his side and listening with greedy ears.

On this occasion I was full of importance as I related to him the adventure of the morning, and enlarged upon all I knew concerning the death of old Wyer. He listened to it all with only a nod of the head now and then, and when I had finished he only replied,—

"Well, I reckon it has been a rough voyage with him for the last forty-five years or so, and I'm glad for him that it is ended. It isn't easy for us short-minded mortals to say what sort of port he'll make at the end of it."

"Why, do you really know anything about his life, Uncle Zimri?" I asked with eager curiosity. "Do you know any reason that he had for living that way like Robinson Crusoe?"

"Why, yes," returned the old man a little curiously. "I suppose I do. I should say, as Doctor Bartlett did, that I know little about the middle part of his life beyond what has been picked up from casual rumor; but, as a young man, I knew Shubael Wyer for as smart a fellow as ever jumped. I sailed a voyage with him, and I know the very day that he put the first blot on his log-book."

"Oh! he did something wicked then that clung to him ever afterwards," said I, for I was quite accustomed to Uncle Zimri's nautical figures of speech, and generally understood their meaning pretty well.

"Yes, it was remorse that changed the whole drift of his life. No one knows that better than I do, for I was nearer to him and more associated with him than any one else at the time of his great wrong. But there are enough elderly people here, who, like the doctor, guess at the fact in a vague and general way, but never care to talk about it. But now that the man has gone, I suppose it doesn't matter so much, and I suppose the case will be generally talked over, so I may as well tell you just how it was."

I kept closer than ever to the side of Uncle Zimri as we paced back and forth across the wharf, at a point where we could see way up into the street, and could not fail to see any person coming down, while he proceeded to relate the story of old Wyer, which I shall give substantially in his own words.

It was in the year '94 that I arrived home from my last voyage to Walwich Bay, in the old "Faith," and felt not a little proud when I was offered a second mate's berth in the "Jasper," then fitting to go into the Pacific Ocean. It was only three years before that the "Beaver" had made the pioneer trip round Cape Horn, but since then several ships had been that route, and returned with good fares, reporting abundance of both sperm and right whales in the Pacific. The "Jasper" was a good stout ship, and well appointed; for Shubael Wyer, who was to command her, had the name of a crack whaleman, although a young man, but two years older than myself, and Peter Joy, whom he had shipped as his mate, was also a high-killer, and was well known to me, for I had made a short voyage with him to the coast of Brazil. Sixteen hundred barrels would fill the Jasper, for we did not build large ships for the business in those days, and we apprehended no difficulty in soon getting that quantity of oil where whales were plenty.

Mr. Joy had been married a few weeks before we sailed, to Dinah Bunker, who was one of the best as well as the prettiest girls of her generation, and that is saying enough. I don't think we have improved any upon women-kind since that day. Of all who were present at the wedding, Captain Wyer was the most discontented and disappointed man, though he tried his best to hide it.

He had offered himself to Dinah, but she was firm in declining his offer, because she preferred and really loved the young man who was going out as his mate. So the captain apparently swallowed his disappointment like a man, and no one had cause to suppose that he would not in time



make up his mind, like most others in such cases, that there are just as good fish in the sea as ever were caught.

Well, we had a good passage round the Horn in the Jasper, and our voyage was now in a fair way to be a prosperous one if we struck down among the sperm whales off the coast of Chili.

We got on very well together in our end of the ship, though I always fancied that dark and bitter thoughts showed themselves in the old man's face whenever Mr. Joy happened to talk about his wife. I suppose you know, my boy, that "the old man" means the captain of the ship,—that is, of your own ship that you belong to,—and he is always called so, even by men old enough to be his father. Sometimes when sitting at the cabin table in the first watch below, Mr. Joy would get the picture of Dinah out of his sea-chest, look at it a while so fond and proud-like, and the old man would always take it and look at it too, and his eyes would flash, and then I always fancied I could read the dark and bitter thoughts stirring in him. The picture, I must say, was a very good likeness, though it was only a painted daub, for this new idea of making the sun paint your pictures had not been thought of in those days. In less than a year after we doubled the Horn, we had our hold nearly full of sperm oil, and wanted only two or three whales to chock off the hatchways and then point the "Jasper's" head toward home. We had worked way off shore, and were cruising far to the westward of Masafuera, when we spoke the "Leander," only five months from home, and got some letters.

Mr. Joy had one, of course, from his young wife, and he was so delighted with it, that he read the most of it aloud, in her very words, in the hearing of the captain. And while the mate was on deck that night I myself saw the old man go and get the letter out of the mate's stateroom, and read it all through, and when he had finished and put the letter back in its place, there was a look on his face such as I had never seen on a human face before, as if the Evil One himself had full possession of him.

I thought I would tell Mr. Joy of his meanness as soon as the watch was relieved at midnight; but then I took a second thought, and determined to put it off, as some future time would do just as well, and it was of no use stirring up a row between them.

The next day we raised a school of whales, and all three boats went down in chase of them, everybody in high spirits at the prospect of soon having a full ship. The old man struck the first whale, a forty-barrel bull, and Mr. Joy was soon harnessed to another, which proved to be a racer, and started off to windward with him, making such speed that a stern chase seemed out of the question. As the rest of the school had made off out of sight, I soon gave up pulling to windward, and turned my attention to the old man.

It was nearly sundown when we got the whale killed, and the twilight was short, so that by the time we had manoeuvred the ship to the whale, hauled him alongside, and got the fluke-rope on, it was shutting down dark. The ship-keeper reported that the mate's boat when last seen was a little forward of the weather-beam, or right dead in the wind's eye from us, and that the whale was still spouting clear and strong, and working to windward.

This was before the ship had run off and luffed to again for fluking our whale. By estimation, the mate must now be at least six or seven miles to the windward of us, and our signal lantern, with its small, dim light, could not be seen by him. It was of no use trying to beat up dragging the whale in the fluke-rope, and the safest

course was to lie hove-to where we were. We had, in those old days, no carriage gun to fire signals with, and, indeed, nothing bigger than a couple of old revolutionary muskets. But one thing better than all we could easily do, and this was to make a fire with scraps on the top of the try-works, and the blaze could be seen a long distance. I was about ordering this to be done, when, to my astonishment, the old man interfered, and countermanded the order.

"Don't begin to worry yet about Mr. Joy," he said in a careless tone. "Of course he can find the ship easy enough, and he has either killed his whale or cut from him long ago. Let the men get their suppers, and all turn in but one boat's crew. I'll take the first watch myself. Keep the signal lantern up at the gaff, and that will be enough."

I looked up at the speck of light swinging aloft, and it seemed like a mockery when I thought of men several miles off looking for it. I felt rather anxious about the mate and his boat's crew, but I must say that the old man's easy confidence had its weight with me. I knew that Peter Joy was not the man to cut from any whale so long as he had daylight to work in, but after dark he certainly would. With the fire-light on the try-works he ought to find the ship without much trouble, but without it he might just as easily go astray. When I had swallowed my hasty supper, I ventured to make the suggestion again.

"Don't fret, Mr. Clark: there is no need of bothering with any scrap-fire. He'll find us fast enough."

"If he has killed his whale you don't think he would undertake to tow him to leeward, do you, sir?"

"Not he; he isn't a fool. He has cut from his whale, dead or alive, before this, and he'll be here directly, so don't worry."

"But if he don't know positively that we have got a whale alongside, he may have killed his, and then lay by him, waiting for the ship to beat up. We ought certainly to make all the signals we can."

"Oh, of course he knows, he must have seen her manoeuvring," returned the old man testily. "You can ring the bell or pound on an empty cask if you think there's any need of it. Or I'll have it done myself; you had better turn in, and I'll take the first watch."

I went below feeling somewhat anxious and dissatisfied, and soon after I heard the tolling of the ship's bell, but it was a small one compared to what our ships carry now-a-days, and could not be heard any distance, against the wind. This was continued only a few minutes, and then there was some pounding on an empty cask, but not very loud, and only by fits and starts as if nobody took much interest in it. Of course if the officer is easy, Jack before the mast will never burden himself with much care, for his rule is to do what he is told to, and leave responsibility to those who are better paid for it.

In a short time the noises ceased, all but the tramp of the old man's feet fore and aft the quarter deck directly over me, and as I was very tired I fell asleep, though not very soundly, for I seemed to be dreaming all the time, and to be in all sorts of queer and uneasy situations.

I must have slept about two hours, for the old silver watch in Mr. Joy's stateroom pointed to ten o'clock when I awoke and jumped out of my bunk. Judging by the roll of the ship and the rushing sound, we must be running off free. Of this I was sensible as soon as I put my head a little way up the cabin stairs. I saw no one moving on deck, but presently the old man, who appeared to have been at the tiller himself, came along with the spy-glass in his hand, as he had heard me moving.

"Keep a sharp lookout forward there! I've been running off a few minutes, Mr. Clark," he said to me; "for I saw, as I thought, a small light off the lee quarter, but I have lost it again, so we may as well come to the wind, and lie still until daylight. I'll call Worth at eleven o'clock, and give you the morning watch. I haven't troubled the men, excepting one on the lookout, as we had the cutting-gear already aloft, and there was no work to do."

I could now perceive that Captain Wyer was nervous and fidgety, that he seemed anxious to say something, he did not know what, and a horrible suspicion was growing upon me. The ship had luffed to again, for the helm had been put down just as I showed my head above deck. But why should the old man be so very considerate of his men as to be at the helm himself! He was not wont to be so as a general thing. You will understand that the ship had been lying by the whale, having, as is usual, the head-yards braced in aback, and the top-sails, excepting the mizzen, lowered down upon the lifts, so that she would lie as nearly still as possible, making only a lee drift. When I awoke, she was off before the wind, and would probably make about four knots an hour with what canvas she had, and that on a course directly away from where the mate's boat was last seen! How long she had been thus running off of course I could not know, but the old man had appeared to have the deck all to himself, and his excuses were too suspicious.

The idea of the boat's light seen off the lee quarter was too ridiculous, as a boat there would have seen our signal-lantern at the gaff long before her own light could have been seen from the ship. I again suggested making a fire on the try-works, and the old man gave his consent, but much as if he could no longer find an excuse for not allowing it. The blaze was soon started, and its glare lighted up the sea for a space around us, but where were poor Mr. Joy and his boat's crew now? There was to be no more sleep for me that night, and at eleven o'clock, when Worth was called, I remained on deck with him, while the captain went below, and remained in his stateroom, brooding in the dark, but I think he never closed his eyes, for he came up several times before morning, and, indeed, after midnight he either was, or pretended to be, thoroughly alarmed. We kept up the scrap-fire all night, banged away upon empty casks, fired the muskets, and rang the ship's bell, but this was all we could do, for it was better to lie still in one position, than to make sail and steer anywhere at random. We would be quite as likely to be running away from, as toward, our lost men.

The darkness wore away, and we had seen nothing, heard nothing of them. At the first streak of daylight, eager eyes were at the mast-heads scanning the surface of the sea, and the whole round of the horizon, but no signs of a boat were to be seen. But there were two ships in sight five or six miles under our lee, one of them boiling, as we could see the smoke from his try-fires.

The captain and I stood side by side in the maintopmast cross-trees after our scrutiny of the horizon, satisfied that the mate's boat was nowhere in sight. He seemed irresolute and undecided what to do, and as I was roused by my suspicions, I took it upon myself to speak out.

"Of course," said I, "the only thing for us to do is to cut away the whale, pack on sail, and beat up to where we were yesterday."

"But I thought," said he, "it would be as well to run off and speak these ships to leeward." They might know something about our boat."

"Nonsense!" I snapped out, forgetting in my rage all respect to my superior officer. "There isn't one chance in a million that Mr. Joy has gone away down there, and besides if either of those ships had our boat and men, wouldn't she be making all sorts of frantic signals to communicate with us?"

The captain had no logic to answer me with, and I was more and more satisfied that he had the night before basely abandoned Mr. Joy, not only by refusing to make the proper signals at nightfall, but by actually running away with the ship. But perhaps it might not yet be too late, and I resolved that all should now be done to save the mate if possible, even if I had to carry my point by open mutiny, for I felt convinced that in such a case most of the crew would support me.

I swung myself into the rigging, and came down two or three ratlines at a jump, while Captain Wyer followed me, but more slowly. I seized a long cutting spade, and rushed to the side, but for a moment I paused, and looked back at the old man.

"What say you, sir? Shall I cut away?"

"Yes, yes," he answered, in a crestfallen kind of way.

But then, as if recollecting himself, he changed his whole tone suddenly, and took charge of the work, giving the orders to masthead the topsails and make all sail.

I did not wait to unjoint the whale, but with two or three blows of the spade, cut the strands of the fluke-rope, and our prize was given to the sharks and the sea-birds. In a few minutes we had packed on sail to our three to-gallant sails, and were lying sharp by the wind, with a good seaman at the helm, and several pairs of sharp eyes aloft, and the old "Jasper" was doing her best, as if she were conscious of something wrong, and wanted to make up for lost time.

All that day we beat to the windward, making short stretches, and just before sundown raised the waif of a dead whale. I lowered my boat and went to it, cut one of the irons out, and satisfied myself by

the marks upon it, that this was the same whale which Mr. Joy had struck. There was also a small waif flying on a short pole, which we knew to be ours, and this waif, as well as the fact that the line had been cut off close up to the iron, showed that the mate had succeeded in killing the whale before he left him, and, in all probability, before dark.

I estimated the distance we had beat up to be not less than twenty miles, as the wind had favored us; thus making due allowance for her drift the night before, there were still some miles of distance to be accounted for. I felt quite sure now that Shubael Wyer was a murderer, and that he had been running the ship off at the very time when the mate was pulling in search of her, and that, too, with no signal but the miserable old lantern, a very mockery of darkness at the distance of a mile.

I said nothing of my thoughts to any one, nor did I hear any word spoken by others, whatever they might have thought. But no one else knew all that I did about the circumstances, and the suspicion seemed to me too horrible to be ever shaped into words.

We lay to that night, and the following two days we cruised the ground all over, zigzagging on various courses, the old man now playing the hypocrite to perfection and really seeming to be quite anxious and distressed about the fate of Mr. Joy. On the third day we were all willing to give up the search, and bear away for home. We were, of course, short-handed for whaling, and we could not run into port



and ship men as can be done now-a-days. But our crew was quite sufficient for merely working the ship, and we brought her home nearly full of oil, so that she made a good paying voyage after all.

During the passage the old man often talked about the loss of the mate, and seemed anxious to smooth matters over, acknowledged that he had made a mistake in not building a fire on the try-works earlier than he did, and also for running off a few minutes for what he thought was a boat's light, though he did not think this last circumstance could have made any difference. I made but little answer to all this, as it was a subject I did not care to talk about, and I was quite sure that he knew my suspicion.

It was a sad, heart-breaking day for Dinah Joy when the "Jasper" dropped her anchor at Nantucket Bar, and the fatal news was carried into her home. I called upon her but once during my short stay on shore, and then my speech was chiefly in praise of her husband, which I knew would please her, and I said as little as possible about the details of his loss. She, poor girl, knew that he went away from the ship in the discharge of his duty, that he never came back, that we had done what we could to find him, and that he could not be found. This, perhaps, was enough for her to be told about the sad affair.

I soon went out again as mate of the same ship, under another captain, and from the day we sailed I never saw Shubael Wyer again, until he returned here, and took up the hermitage on Coatue Point, and then both he and I were elderly men. I knew, by hearsay, that he declined to go into the Pacific again, preferring a shorter voyage, and that soon after we sailed he took command of the brig "Vulture" for a voyage on the Brazil Banks.

He was absent rather more than a year, and on his return renewed his attentions to the Widow Joy, now that a suitable time of widowhood had passed away. As you well know, long-voyage sailors make short courtships; indeed they must do so from the very nature of the case. A year and a half will do wonders in blunting the edge of grief, and then Shubael Wyer was called a likely man, and could get a ship whenever he might say the word. And Dinah Joy, though she had a prattling son, was still as lovely and as loving and seemingly as young as ever.

No tidings had ever been received about the lost mariner, and all hope had long ago been given up. It so happened that all the rest of the boat's crew were strangers to the island, and little was known of them, and there had been but one house of mourning in town by reason of this disaster. Now the cloud was to be lifted from that one, and all the friends of the parties were ready to signify their approval. Surely so young a widow ought not to bury her heart forever in the depths of the Pacific Ocean, when she had a chance to do better.

The guests had already been bidden to the marriage, and the time for the ceremony was less than twenty-four hours off in the future.

Dinah and the fond captain were sitting together in her cosy little room, and talking of the new life that lay before them, when, without a word of warning, Peter Joy, in all the strength and vigor of his young manhood, stood before them.

I was not there, and if I had been, I suppose it would have been impossible to describe just what happened; but of

course Dinah fell fainting into the arms of her husband, and when he was ready to turn his attention to any one else, Captain Wyer had vanished. The sea appeared literally to have given up its dead, and he had not resolution to face the man whom he had murdered. He made inquiries of one of the crew of the sloop in which his mate had just arrived from the mainland, and learned the story as they had learned it from Mr. Joy's own lips.

It appeared that having killed his whale, and perceiving by the manœuvres of the ship that she was taking another along-side, and could not possibly beat up to him, he had taken his whale in tow, expecting of course to see the firelight directly after dark, and that another boat would be sent up to windward to meet him and assist in towing. But being disappointed when he saw and heard nothing, he had thought it prudent to abandon the whale, and try to find the ship; and he was actually pulling with might and main all the time during which I had reason to know that the "Jasper" was really running away from him! Two or three hours of this work was sufficient to tire and discourage his boat's crew, and then it was impossible to do anything with any chance of safety, if no one could determine whether they might be going too far or not far enough, while a deviation of a point or two from the true course would carry them quite out of all sight and sound of the ship. So the young man took the only prudent course, to heave to and lie still until daylight. When morning broke they found themselves alone on the ocean.

It was decided to make their way eastward, toward the coast, as the only chance of safety, for to run westward was only to go off into unknown seas. They could not again find their waifed whale, though they kept a sharp lookout for it, and as it was idle to think of pulling to windward, the boat was got on the southeastern tack under sail, and the most rigid allowance was put upon the very small stock of food and water. The dreadful history of the succeeding days you must imagine for yourself, for I think it would sound much like the tale of the survivors of the "Essex," which I presume you have read.

When picked up four weeks later by an English ship, the mate and one other were still alive, but in the last stages of exhaustion and weakness. The two were tenderly cared for, but one died, even after he had reached the English ship alive. Peter Joy was the sole survivor out of six; his fine constitution carried him through, and gave him strength to rally. But another day would have been too late to save even him. There had been no opportunity for him to reach home or get aboard an American vessel, and thus he had made the voyage in the English whaler, and gone home in her to London.

The sloop which brought Peter Joy to Nantucket left again next day, taking Shubael Wyer as a passenger, and from that day his history for more than twenty years is a sealed book to all of us. This strange disappearance of course caused much talk for a while; but it was a nine-days' wonder, and most people thought his disappointment in love, occurring for the second time in connection with the same woman, was sufficient explanation. He had gone away for a while to wear off the keen edge of it, and would, no doubt, soon return. But the real truth lay deeper than this. He had indeed been disappointed and thwarted in the one point which was a kind of mania with him,—his passion for Dinah Bunker. He had seen her own chosen husband restored as it were from his ocean grave, and the act for which his soul must burn with life-long remorse had involved the murder of five other men. His crime had been a wholesale one; while in its sole object it had proved an utter failure.

Peter Joy himself, in the midst of his great happiness, had many a tender thought for his old commander, for no idea of treachery had ever entered his mind. He had thought it strange that he could

not find the ship that night, or see any lights, but the horrible idea of having been intentionally abandoned had never entered his thoughts. He received the first hint of it from myself, when we accidentally met each other round the other side of the Horn a year or two later. Putting all the facts together, he was entirely convinced of the truth of my suspicion, but to no other person have I ever told all the circumstances until to-night, now that Wyer has gone to his final account. It was a matter which it could do no good to talk about, nor do I think that Peter Joy ever mentioned it again, unless, may be, to his wife. He and Dinah have gone to rest, and their two sons, who are both now in command of ships, are probably as ignorant of the details as the average of our people are. Suspicious whispers there have been, which would account for the guarded words of Doctor Bartlett this morning, for others of the Jasper's crew did talk and hint, but none of them knew all of the matter that I did.

It is rather more than twenty years since Shubael Wyer appeared here as suddenly as he had left, and immediately settled into that strange way of life at Coatue. He bought that shanty of some fellows who had put it there for convenience on gunning cruises, and he improved upon it, and also bought himself a dory. I have now and then run foul of him during his short and far-between visits to town, but he evidently knew and avoided me, and we have never exchanged a word with each other since I sailed on my second voyage in the Jasper, leaving him here at home.

It can do you no harm, my boy, to know the truth of the story; and the moral will not be thrown away upon you, I hope. You see how a man may blast his whole life by letting foolish passions get the mastery of him for a single hour, for the worm of remorse has been gnawing at Shubael Wyer's heart-strings for five-and-forty years.

The tale told by Uncle Zimri has always appeared to me like something related in confidence, and though he did not specially enjoin secrecy upon me, I have seldom spoken of it to anyone.

Now that I am getting gray myself, and nearly three generations have passed on since that tragedy occurred, there can be no harm in making it public.

Whatever worldly goods the hermit left behind were taken in charge by his nearest relatives, but I think nothing of great value was found. There were queer rumors about his having been a pirate during what was called the east-away period of his life, which included all the years of his prime, and strange dreams about fabulous amounts of gold coin buried on Coatue Point after the fashion of Kyd and other free-booters of classic memory. But no such dreams were ever realized, as but a small amount of money was found among his effects. Before I went to sea the next year, the shanty had been removed from the ground, and there was nothing left on that sterile neck of land to mark the site where Shubael Wyer, the man of mystery, had spent the last twenty years of his blighted life.—Ballou's Monthly.

JANUARY 8, 1881.



# THE ROVING EYE

By RUDOLPH ELIE

## The Chewing up Of Cap'n Wood

Mrs. Ruth Ley, a Belmont writer and lecturer who can only be described as dashing, dashed in here the other day clutching a little blue pamphlet and asked me if I believed it possible for a man to be chewed by a whale and live.

"You seem to be forgetting Noah," I said. "He even got digested, didn't he?"

"Oh, yes, that's right," said Mrs. Ley, who seems to be moving when she is sitting still. "Must have been one of those whales without teeth. But I mean a man chewed up by a sperm whale, like old Cap'n Albert Wood of Nantucket did?"

It was a new episode to me. "I'll tell you what," said Ruth, who is currently showing a film on Nantucket around the lecture circuit, "I'll leave the pamphlet with you and maybe some rainy day you might make something of it. It's quite a yarn."

Though this is no rainier day than any, it is indeed quite a yarn in a field where yarns are as thick as scrimshaw in a whaling museum. And it is best told in the original by a young seaman named Henry A. Phelon who was in the long boat when it happened.

### From Long Line

The man it happened to was Albert Wood, a Nantucketer (well, not quite: he was born off island in 1813 when his mother went across to visit in Swansea and delivered him prematurely) descended from a long line of seafaring men. He went to sea as a youth, rising, by the time he was 30 years old, to be master. But by 1948 whaling out of Nantucket was already on the decline and Wood shipped out as mate on the Plough Boy. It was in March of the following year he had the date with the whale.

"These 24 hours commenced with light winds Southerly and Easterly trades," begins the log of the Phelon boy on Sunday, March 4, 1849, in the Pacific between Tahiti and the Galapagos. "At 9 am the cry of 'there she blows' was the pleasant sound from the mast head, which proved to be 2 large Schools of Sperm Whales, one School to the leeward and one to the windward."

"Mr. Folger and Mr. Antoine went to windward. We then . . . went to windward (with Mr. Wood and Mr. Sinclair) and the whales went down just before we came to them. They soon came up again, there were 10 of them in the School heading toward the boat. Soon got behind them."

"When we got close onto them Mr. Wood whispered to Mr. Brown 'which is the largest?' Charles said the middle

one. With a will we went right in among them and smack onto him. Brown put two irons into him right under his hump and he made the water fly with the lashing of his flukes and our poor boat rolling and tumbling about in the foam. The boatsteerer said 'we have got an ugly customer.'

"The whale kept going around in a circle spouting blood (and) Mr. Wood lanced him several times. We were watching our chance to go on him again when he milled around. Mr. Wood sang out 'stern hard, stern hard!' We were steering against a heavy sea and did not make much headway when all at once I felt the boat going over and heard a crashing sound. I fell over backwards and came up underneath the boat. I cleared myself, dropped down and swam from under the boat."

"Oh! What a sight I beheld! I was not more than 5 feet from him, he had the bows of the boat in his jaws crushing it, and Mr. Wood was lying inside of his jaws. I was so frightened I took an oar (and) swam away as fast as I could. The whale then milled around and came to me. I looked around and saw poor Brown close to his flukes struggling to get away. The whale threw him up on his flukes and must have killed him. . . . Poor Mr. Wood, we picked him up, he was clinging to a piece of the boat his arms thrown over it. He was groaning terrible. He could not have lasted many moments more."

### A Few Details

They got him at last to the doctorless Plough Boy, and young Phelon's log thereafter tells of the anxious time taking the gravely injured Wood to the nearest civilization, Tahiti. When they got there 28 days later he was on his feet, almost, to the astonishment of the whole ship's company.

Cap'n Wood's own account, written many years later, differs in but a few details from that of the apprentice. According to him, there were only seven whales in the school and the one he had harpooned "showed fight & kept his eye on the boat all the time." When it clamped down its jaws on the long boat's bow, he found himself sitting "astraddle of his jaw under water with his jaw closed holding me tight. While I was in that position he brought his fluke down across the stern of the boat killing the boatsteerer & at the same time let go of me so I swung clear of him & rose to the top of the water. . . . After arriving on board ship my clothes were cut off & they found a hole with fat hanging out here on my right side where I had been astraddle of his jaw. The inner part of my thigh was cut to the bone & a wound on my back about 4 in. long & another on my head. The whale was captured and made about 80 barrels & I have one of his teeth."

And the Cap'n died in bed at the age of 71 in Nantucket, to which he returned 15 years after his encounter with the whale. On the dock was his 15-year-old son, whom he had never seen, and would not have recognized unless the boy had been accompanied by the Cap'n's ancient dog Obed.

### THE BOSTON HERALD

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1955



## Almost in a Whale's Jaw!

BY A. H. G.

The old *Arcturus* was one of the hardest looking specimens of a whaling vessel to be found afloat, and the only reason I shipped in her as boatsteerer was because I was hard up, dead broke, or more nautically speaking, "without a shot in the locker." The crew were a jovial set of fellows in the main, and the skipper a fine specimen of an old-fashioned whaling captain.

Six months previous to the time my story opens, I had been set ashore from the good ship *Nauticon*, and placed in the hospital at Melbourne, where I had lain for the greater part of the time oblivious to all surroundings. But finally the fever to which I had succumbed ran its course, and I was pronounced convalescent. My recovery was, however, gradual, and it was not until full six weeks after I entered the hospital to die or get well, as the case might be, that I received my discharge, and suddenly found myself reduced in strength and wasted by disease, in a strange port, without a dollar in my pocket.

To be sure, Capt. Barker, or Uriah Barker, as he preferred being called on shore, (for he was as slick a Quaker as ever sat a "sitting" out in Friends' Meeting,) had amply supplied me with funds, and charged it to my account on leaving the ship; but during my delirium some one had relieved me of my wallet, and I had nothing left but my good name to draw on for support.

The *Nauticon* had sailed a few days after landing me, but Capt. Barker had left word that he should touch at Melbourne in about three months, and as only half of that time had now elapsed, I knew that I must bestir myself and that speedily. I accordingly took the first chance that presented itself, and though I had been second mate of the *Nauticon*, I laid aside all scruples of pride and booked myself as a boatsteerer on the *Arcturus*.

We were cruising in the Pacific and had met with rather indifferent luck, when late one afternoon the cheering cry of "there she blows!" came down from the look-out aloft. As quickly as possible the boats were lowered and in hot pursuit, the mate's, in which I was stationed, taking the lead.

Singling out the largest of the school he determined to capture him at all hazards. But as if aware of the intentions of his pursuers, the animal showed no disposition to allow us to approach him, and led us a long and fruitless chase, until at last, losing all patience, the mate declared with an oath that he'd never go back to the ship without putting an iron into him, at the same time adding as a stimulus "a five-dollar gold-piece to every man if you will lay me alongside the next time he breaks water!"

The whale had just sounded, and we strained every nerve to reach the spot where he was next expected to rise. Some twenty minutes went by and not a word was spoken, when suddenly a slight ripple on the surface, followed by an upheaving of the waters not half a dozen lengths ahead, indicated that he was rising.

A few more strokes brought us to the spot, and ere the monster had fairly emerged from the water, I had securely planted an iron in his body.

The usual command of "starn all!" was given, and the boat backed off in an instant, just in time to escape being driven into the air by a stroke of the animal's tail, as, feeling the sting of the barbed instrument, he started off with the rapidity of lightning, dragging the line so swiftly through the chocks as to necessitate the

pouring on of water to keep them from blazing.

The line was soon run out, and yet he showed no signs of letting up; though "drags" had been added, and everything that could be done to deaden his headway. We were ploughing through the water at a tremendous rate, the ship could no longer be seen, and night was coming on, and though we knew it was impossible for the present state of affairs to continue long, we could not help feeling some uneasiness in regard to our situation.

"I hate to cut from him," said the mate, but if he runs on this way much longer, we shan't be able to find the ship; we won't get back before dark as it is. There, he sounds!" he exclaimed excitedly, as the line suddenly commenced to slacken; "now, one more good pull, and the next time he breathes, I'll let daylight through him!"

The order was now given to haul in slack, which was carefully coiled away in the tub. The mate now seized his lance and stationed himself in the bow, while I went aft and took the steering oar, and we eagerly waited the re-appearance of the monster. Suddenly a mighty mass emerged from the water not a boat's length abreast of us. With one turn of the oar, I brought the boat about with her head full upon him.

The mate aimed a thrust at his vitals with the lance, and again gave the order to "starn all," which was executed barely in time to escape destruction, as frenzied with rage and pain the wounded animal lashed the sea into foam in his agony.

Suddenly he descended, but immediately re-appeared again and rushed at the boat, open-mouthed. All save myself instinctively leaped into the water, but providentially, I kept my station at the steering oar, though stood in readiness to jump in an instant.

Seizing the boat in his ponderous jaws, the enraged animal raised it until the water poured in over the stern, and then, as if disdaining to crush so frail an object, he loosed his hold and slid down out of sight, only to re-appear at the stern. Again he rolled himself over, and his ponderous lower jaw, armed with rows of ivory, swung open and he came on as though he would devour the frail craft which had borne the instrument of his torture. I gave one glance at the huge gaping jaws, then dropped the oar and sprang forward just as they were about to close upon the boat. But fortunately as they did so, he struck against her, causing her to forge ahead a little, and her sloping sides slid harmlessly out of the closing jaws with a harsh grating sound. The steering oar fell out, striking upon the head of the baffled monster, which only served to increase his rage. Again he lashed the sea frantically with his tail, and seizing the oar in his jaws, he snapped it asunder in a twinkling. Then, having apparently vented his rage, he turned flukes and descended rapidly.

Seizing the hatchet, I severed the line at a single blow, but did not breathe easy until I saw him rise full three-quarters of a mile distant, and making off as though pursued by a legion of evil spirits.

I now turned my attention to picking up the crew, who were struggling in the water, and having secured them all, we started to return to the ship. The bow of the boat had been somewhat crushed by the jaws of the leviathan and it required constant bailing to keep her free.

Night now set in upon us, dark and cloudy. Not a star was in sight to guide us, and we were out upon the broad ocean without a compass, and fully ten miles distant from the ship. To try to find our ves-

sel seemed a hopeless task, but as there was no alternative, we set about it, and headed as nearly as we could judge in the direction where she lay. For hours we pulled fruitlessly about, discovering no trace whatever of the ship, and we finally settled down to the conviction that we were lost. We were without a mouthful of food, and all, save myself, drenched to the skin, in a half-stoven boat, which could only be kept afloat by constant bailing, and every indication of an approaching storm, which, should it overtake us in our present plight, we must inevitably go to the bottom.

The Mulgrave Islands we knew were about a hundred miles West of the ship, and we determined to lay our course for them as soon as daylight should reveal our position, and we could form some idea of directions, for we were now completely "gallied," and were only pulling listlessly about, regardless of what course we took.

At daylight, however, we sighted a ship about five miles to windward, bearing down almost directly for us. As soon as they were near enough we signalled them, but they had already seen us, and were running down to us, and we were soon taken on board; but judge of my surprise and joy at the discovery that it was none other than the good ship *Nauticon* to which we were indebted for our rescue.

Of course it was a time of general rejoicing on board, and I had all I could do to answer questions and receive congratulations both upon my recovery of health and rescue in mid-ocean in so unexpected a manner.

I learned that they had put into Melbourne at the time appointed, but could find no trace of me beyond the fact that I had been discharged from the hospital, and supposing I had grown tired of waiting and had joined some other vessel, they had shipped a man in my place and proceeded on their voyage. Nothing was known of him, and though no fault could be found with his performance of duty, for he was a rough seaman, there was something about him that inspired suspicion and distrust.

Four days before he was struck on the head by a falling block and remained insensible for several hours, and though at first he appeared to rally, he was now sinking gradually, and it was evident that his end was approaching; and so, before night, I found myself installed in my old position as second mate of the *Nauticon*.

The injured man was delirious the greater part of the time, and by what they had gathered from the incoherent sentences he had let fall during his ravings, they had come to the conclusion that he must be some escaped convict.

That afternoon I went below to see him during one of his lucid spells. At sight of me he started as though he had received an electric shock, but composing himself with an apparent effort, he listened attentively as I narrated the manner and cause of my appearance on board. He appeared uneasy however, during my stay, and after a few moments' conversation, I left him and went on deck.

During the night he seemed to sink more rapidly than ever, and in the morning he expressed a desire to see me alone.

Wondering what he could possibly want with me, I went below. I found him perfectly rational, though very weak indeed, and it was evident that his end was fast approaching. He requested me to call the captain, as he said he had a confession to make to me to which he desired there should be some one to testify after he was gone.

Still more astonished, I complied with his request, when he began by relating how that he had been transported to Australia for a felony committed in England some twenty-five years before, and served out a ten years' sentence. Having no desire to return to England, he had shipped on board a whaler and worked his way up until he obtained a berth as second officer; but the love for stimulants had grown upon him until he became unfit for duty and was discharged from the ship. He soon run through his money, and for months had led a miserable existence on shore, picking up what little he could at odd jobs, and devoting it all to the gratifying of his appetite. He was finally taken down with the tremens and carried to the hospital in Melbourne.

"And now," continued he, "I will explain the cause of my apparent agitation yesterday which you no doubt noticed. After my recovery, I was retained as an attendant at the hospital, and while serving there in that capacity, you were brought in and placed in my ward. I discovered you had a considerable sum of money about you, and determined to possess myself of it. An opportunity presented itself just before I left. You were delirious and not expected to live, and chancing to be alone with you, I rifled your pockets and concealed the money.

"After leaving the hospital, I went away from Melbourne, and was gone some months, and on coming back, got a berth in this ship; but now, my voyages in this life are about ended by the knock in the head by that infernal block. I ain't going to play the hypocrite, and talk and rant about repentance, nor pretend that if I was going to start a life from the stump again, I should lead a life of perfection. I know I've been a hard ticket all through this life, and whinnings and regrets now ain't going to help things any in the next; but before I die, I want to make what restitution I can to you, because you've never injured me, and I can't take anything along with me. I've used up pretty much the whole of the money, but what there is left is stowed away in the till of my chest, which, with everything in it and whatever money I've got coming to me from the ship, is yours, and will, I think, make ample amends for the amount you lost."

"Thee has made a most remarkable confession," said Capt. Barker, "and 'tis but right thee should make what atonement thee can for the wrong thee has committed; but I will forbear to reproach thee, however, and only recommend thee to make thy peace with the Most High, before whom thee must shortly stand in judgment. I would suggest however, that to better insure the furtherance of thy desire, thee leave a paper expressive of thy wishes, duly drawn up and witnessed. To this he assented, and Capt. Barker drew up a paper which he dictated, and to which he affixed his signature. It was then witnessed by the captain, mate, and one of the boatsteerers, and placed in the former's hands for safe keeping.

"Now," continued the dying man, "you will not wonder that I was startled at your suddenly appearing before me out here in mid-ocean, when I had supposed you dead for some months. Instead of that, however, 'the boot will soon be on 'tother leg,' for before to-morrow night I shall pass in my checks, while you will have my place in the ship, which I understand, you once occupied. Well, I'm glad for you, and only hope you won't lay it up too hard against me after I'm gone, because of the little amount I borrowed."



I assured him he had my full forgiveness, and that he had doubly repaid me, not only for the actual amount I had lost, but for all the trouble it had occasioned me. I now left him, and returned to the deck to attend to my duties.

That afternoon he died, and at sunset we buried him in the ocean. A burial at sea is always solemn and impressive, and this was rendered doubly so by a fearful storm that night which tried the good ship to her utmost. The weather had been dark and lowering for several days, with a moderate breeze stirring, but just at sunset, it died away entirely, and for two hours we lay becalmed over the spot where we had committed him to the deep. A brisk breeze suddenly sprung up, which soon increased to a gale, and at midnight we were driving before such a tempest as is only experienced in the tropics. By morning however, the storm had abated, and on sounding the pumps it was found that the ship had sustained no serious damage.

The mate and crew of the *Arcturus* were subsequently transferred on board of a homeward bound vessel, and eventually arrived at New Bedford.

It would seem as though the hand of Providence was working out our salvation in preventing us from reaching our vessel after the memorable encounter with the spermaceti, for though the *Arcturus* was spoken the day afterward and reported short handed, having lost the mate with a boat's crew, supposed to have been carried down by a whale, she never reached port. Whether she was wrecked on some of the coral islands that abound in the Pacific, or whether she foundered in a gale two days subsequently to our leaving her, are matters for speculation, but being short-handed, and a very old vessel, the latter theory seems quite plausible.

In due time our vessel reached Nantucket, and on settling up the voyage, which had been a prosperous one, I found quite a snug little sum coming to me on the account of the deceased second mate whose untimely end resulted so beneficially to me, and I never thought of him without regret for his fate.

One more little incident and I am done. A whaleship arrived in New London about three months after our return home, and reported picking up a dead whale with harpoon and line attached. On the harpoon was the word "*Arcturus*," and by comparing notes, I found it was the one I cut loose from the day I experienced the thrilling sensation of being ALMOST IN A WHALE'S JAW!—*New Bedford Shipping List.*

MAR CH 11, 1876.

Arthur H. Gardner



NINE MEMBERS of the Whalemens Club, Inc., assembled for their final photo as they voted recently to disband the organization after 29 years of activity in the interest of whaling here. Seated, left to right, are Lawrence P. Wing, the Rev. Charles S. Thurber, Harry M. Gay and Albert E. Welsh, while standing, left to right, are Allen E. Wordell, Albion B. Stone, Fred W. Coon, William H. Tripp and John Champion. (General Photo).

#### A Log-Book Census.

Editors of *The Inquirer and Mirror*:

A check-list of all known Logbooks of American whaling vessels is now being compiled. At the present time over 2,000 have been located. The list would include Logbooks in private hands and institutions, and would assist persons engaged in studies of the whaling industry, town histories, genealogy, and Herman Melville.

If you own such records I would be most grateful if you would send me a list giving the following information:

1. Name of vessel or vessels included in the Log.
2. Full name of Master.
3. Home Port.
4. Rig of vessel—bark, ship, etc.
5. Date of departure and return.
6. Please note special features such as sketches, crew list, accounts of expenses, etc.

An indication as to whether the item is a Logbook or a Journal would be helpful. The Log is the official record kept by the mate—usually containing short entries covering the weather, latitude and longitude, and whales taken. The Journal is a fuller and often more valuable record kept by any officer or crewman, giving personal experiences and reactions.

This check-list will be kept at the Providence Public Library until such time that publication is practical. The list will also be cross-referenced so as to list all vessels sailing from a particular port, all voyages by master, and the holdings of an institution. We will gladly furnish information by letter on the above records.

Sincerely yours,  
Stuart C. Sherman,  
Assistant Librarian.  
The Providence Public Library.  
Providence 3, Rhode Island.

Aug. 4, 1951



# HEROIC DAYS IN NANTUCKET EARLY HISTORY

William F. Macy Talks on  
'Whalers and Quakers'  
at Whalemens Club

Old-time whalemens and those who relish the tales of the whaling days were entertained last evening by William F. Macy, president of the Nantucket Historical Association, the speaker following the clam bake served to members and guests of the Whalemens Club at Grimshaw's pavilion at Fort Phoenix, last evening. About a hundred members and guests enjoyed an excellent bake, and before introducing Mr. Macy as the speaker of the evening William H. Tripp, secretary of the club, read letters from absentee members, among them Judson W. Cobb of South Manchester, Conn., and Captain F. M. Van Natter of Vincennes, Ind., who sent greetings. Mr. Tripp then presented to Mr. Macy as a gift from Pardon B. Gifford a painting of the ship Union of Nantucket, sunk by a whale in 1807, the first vessel known to have been rammed and sunk by a whale. Mr. Gifford executed the painting in colors on the inside of a large sea clam shell. Mr. Macy's talk was on "The Whalers and Quakers of Old Nantucket," with the emphasis on the whalers, first telling something of the early history of Nantucket, its rise and fall as a whaling port, its settlement first by Baptists and Presbyterians, followed later by the Quakers, who came to dominate the affairs of the town, concluding with a series of stories and anecdotes that have made Nantucket unique. Mr. Macy's devotion to Nantucket history has resulted in an accumulation of data of great value, in which he has neglected neither the factual nor the picturesque.

Mr. Macy has gathered a good many of the early whaling stories, anecdotes and phrases that have a nautical origin in his recently published book, "The Nantucket Scrap Basket." Apologetic in telling several stories that might be well known to a New Bedford audience, Mr. Macy told of his amazement, following an address at the New Bedford Rotary Club recently, when some member asked him to explain the meaning of the phrase "Splice the main brace."

In his tale of early Nantucket, Mr. Macy reminded his audience that New Bedford is in a sense a daughter of Nantucket since Nantucket is the mother port of American whaling. In the days before the American Revolution included among the leading ports of the colonies and third largest town in Massachusetts, ranking next to Salem. In 1820 Nantucket had a population greater than that of New Bedford or Fall River. It was not until 1830 that New Bedford exceeded Nantucket in population, 7,592 here as compared with 7,202 in Nantucket. Nantucket had her peak population of 10,000 in 1842, by which time New Bedford was sending out three times as many whaling ships as Nantucket.

It was Joseph Russell who sent out the first New Bedford whaling sloop in 1755, and ten years later New Bedford had a fleet of four whaling sloops, by which time Nantucket had 150 whaling ships at sea. Mr. Macy said it is a question still unsettled whether it was a Nantucket or a New Bedford ship that first rounded Cape Horn to hunt for whales in the Pacific Ocean. The Nantucket ship Beaver, sailing in August of 1791, was the first ship from that port to round the Horn, while the first New Bedford ship to round the Horn was the Rebecca sailing from here in September, 1791.

The first settler on Nantucket was Thomas Macy in 1659, the speaker telling his audience that he is the eighth in descent from this first settler. Following this first settler came the Starbuckes, Coffins, Swains and Husseys, names long familiar in Nantucket history. It was shore whaling at first that was the foundation of the industry, the inhabitants of the island having island lookouts, from which whales were sighted, after which boats put out from the island to make their captures. The carcasses were brought ashore and the blubber tried out at convenient shore stations.

Telling the story of how right whales came to be known by that name, Mr. Macy related the anecdote that they were known as the right whales to be caught as distinguished from the more ferocious sperm whale. It was Christopher Hussey, who was blown off shore in a storm in 1712, he said, who was the first to capture a sperm whale. This led to the development of sperm whaling as producing the more valuable oil, with the result that in succeeding years Nantucket whalemens devoted their attention almost exclusively to sperm whale capture, passing by the less valuable whales.

Mr. Macy reminded his audience that Nantucket carried on its great industry in the face of the difficulty that a sand bar with only nine feet of water over it prevented the entry of vessels of greater draft. Vessels drawing 12 and 14 feet of water and more were floated over the bar by means of camels. Shore whaling continued for a time even after Nantucket was sending a large fleet of vessels to sea.

The Nantucket industry was struck a hard blow in the war of the American Revolution, in which 134 of the Nantucket ships were either lost or captured. After the war the industry began to build up, so that by 1790 the island was again sending out from 30 to 40 ships. The industry was hit hard again in the war of 1812, when half of the island fleet was again lost. Again the industry began to thrive until it reached its peak in 1842.

New Bedford forged ahead in the industry after William Rotch, a native of Nantucket, removed his business to New Bedford. It was a Rotch ship, the Bedford, Mr. Macy reminded his audience, that was the first American ship to fly the American flag in an English port, and he added it was three Nantucket ships, the Dartmouth, Eleanor and Beaver, that figured in Boston's famous tea party.

Nantucket is the only town in Massachusetts, said the speaker, that was never taxed for the support of established religion. It was 50 years after the first settler came to Nantucket that the first church was established, the early settlers coming there to make their home to escape the Puritan persecution. The first Quakers came to the island in 1698, and the first Quaker Meeting was established there in 1709. Soon after this the Quakers came to dominate the business and civic affairs of the community, the simplicity of the Quaker Meeting attracting the greater number of the inhabitants. At the peak of her prosperity, Mr. Macy said, several families of the island were included among the wealthiest families in the country.

Nantucket's decline had definitely set in by 1850, following the great fire of 1846 that wiped out much of the island water front. The island sent out its last whaler in 1870, in which year the population had dwindled to 3,000. Residents of the island found it difficult to make both ends meet, and the best paid positions on the island, such as that of the bank cashier or the principal of the High School, paid a salary of only \$700 or \$800 a year.

Today Nantucket has a permanent population of about 3,800, with a Summer population of from 15,000 to 20,000.

Answering an inquiry as to the origin of the name of Nantucket, Mr. Macy said it is an Indian name, which means "The Far Away Land."

New comers to the island, said Mr. Macy, frequently ask the question as to the origin of the name of the Pacific National Bank at one end of Main Street and the Pacific Club at the other end of the street. He said the explanation is that Nantucket derived much of its wealth from whales captured in the Pacific Ocean and hence the name of the bank established in 1824. He related the origin of the Pacific Club, dating from 1858, in which year a group of Nantucket whaling captains were entertained in New York. On their way home they conceived the idea of the club, which has continued to this day. Captain Obed Swain was the last of the founders of the club.

Mr. Macy told a score of Nantucket whaling stories and other nautical yarns and anecdotes. Included was the story of the "Dor Bark Skippers," which had its origin at the time Nantucket had passenger packets running between the island and New York, New London, Boston and New Bedford. Running through Long Island in the fog at night, the packets hugged the windward shore and it was reputed kept their course and learned their position by the sound of the dogs barking on shore.

Mr. Macy was an overnight guest at the home of William H. Tripp, curator of the Old Dartmouth Historical Society.

Sept. 1934

## Use of Whale's Teeth.

The account of the old Susan in a recent number of The Inquirer and Mirror, particularly the reference to the carved whale's teeth, recalled to many readers cases of marvellous ingenuity exercised by the Nantucket whalemens in handling the splendid ivories taken from whales' jaws, many examples of which are preserved in the collection of the Nantucket Historical Association. The writer was present at a recent gathering where the subject was under discussion, and was much entertained by the experience related by a gentleman, who in early life followed whaling. He stated that prior to leaving port he had been fitted to a set of false teeth, and not long after getting to sea, had the misfortune to crack the plate amidships while laboring with a bit of hardsack. In his disgust he cast the useless molars and incisors overboard and did the best he could, although at considerable annoyance and discomfort. Finally the thought occurred to him to attempt the construction of a set from the tooth of a whale, and to think was to act. He took large sail needles and formed them into saws, files and chisels, and selecting a tooth that promised to fill the bill, set to work. He made a cast of his mouth to guide him in his labors, and his spare moments for nine months were given over to the manufacture of a complete upper set of false teeth in one piece, made from the whale's tooth. The result was a joyous success, and the teeth were completed, fitted perfectly, and were worn for years. He paid no attention to forming the teeth after Nature's laws, all being alike; and when he put them aside, after years of faithful service, to give place to a modern dental set, they were as perfect as when he first fitted them in his mouth. In moving about the teeth have been lost, which our friend now regrets, as he would like to contribute them to the collection in the Historical rooms.

## Rise And Fall of American Whaling Fleet.

The story of the rise and fall of the American whaling fleet is written in the Statistics Division of the Commerce Department's Bureau of Navigation and Steamboat Inspection, and the history that is written there indicates the final disappearance of this once important fleet.

According to information made public by Assistant Director Arthur J. Tyrer, of the Bureau, there existed in the United States only 12 whaling vessels of 2,014 gross tons on June 30, 1932, as compared with a record of 198,594 gross tons at the close of 1858.

Since the time the first American whalers headed their well provisioned vessels away from the New England coast late in the 18th century for their search of "swimming treasure", the headquarters for the fleet have moved completely across the continent, and today all American whaling vessels are operated out of San Francisco and Seattle.

Early records of the Bureau of Navigation and Steamboat Inspection show a whaling fleet of 4,129 gross tons in 1794. At this time, the number of vessels in the fleet was not a matter of record.

The progress of the fleet was not steady and smooth. In 1798, the fleet dropped to 763 tons. The record does not indicate whether this reduction was the result of natural hazards on the high seas or an unprofitable turn of the industry. From the latter date the fleet expanded with more or less regularity until in 1803 it totaled 12,390 gross tons. By 1814 the fleet had shrunk to 562 gross tons, probably as a result of the war of 1812.

From that point, the whaling fleet entered upon a more substantial period of its history, and by 1820 it totaled 36,445 gross tons, and nine years later it reached the record of 57,284 gross tons, only to slip back the next year to 39,705 gross tons.

The 1830 slump apparently served as a breathing spell preparatory to increased whaling activity and in the next year owners of 82,797 gross tons indicated that their vessels were in the whaling fleet of the United States. By 1845 the tonnage increased to 190,903 with the peak of all time in this trade reached in 1858 when 198,594 tons were listed in the fleet.

That marked the zenith of the whaling fleet, and from that date until now the size of the whaling fleet has steadily diminished.

The first record of the number of the vessels in the fleet appears for 1868, exactly ten years after the peak. In that year, 349 vessels of 78,486 gross tons were shown in the fleet.

The recent and current history of the whaling fleet is told simply in the following figures:

In 1900 there were 42 vessels of 9,899 gross tons; 1910, 36 vessels of 9,308 gross tons; 1920, 26 vessels of 3,901 tons; 1930, 14 vessels of 6,940 tons; 1931, 13 vessels of 6,627 tons, and in the fiscal year ended June 30, 1932, there were 12 vessels of 2,014 tons. The fleet today is made up of 11 steam vessels and one motor. In the day when whalers were an important part of the merchant fleet of the United States virtually each one was a sailing craft.

JULY 30, 1932

Oct. 29, 1934



### A Protest from Old Nantucket.

We rise to protest. We are islanders, and our island has an illustrious past. Whether it will have an equally illustrious future must surely be as the gods will, since we seem quite content to sit still and let things happen.

Now we have come of seafaring folk. Our great-grandfathers and our grandfathers, our fathers and our uncles were all captains of whale or merchant ships, and we have the right to speak. For our generation no ships were fitted out, so with the proceeds of the long voyages of our forbears, some of us went to college, and some of us stayed at home and helped make these retired ship captains more or less comfortable during their last stay in an earthly port. Whether the college curriculum or the society of the captains was the more educational surely is not for us to decide. We can but affirm that our ways were ways of pleasantness, and if not all our paths were peace, yet certainly no complaint could be made of any stupefying monotony.

It is of the captains that we wish to speak. It is not entirely in accordance with our "druthers" that our island has become within a few years a fairly popular summer resort. Among the many annoyances we are called upon to endure is the favor we seem to find in the note-book of the ready writer. We have been written up for nearly every publication from Maine to California, from Cuba to the Philippines, until the reading public must be able to recite the salient points of our island's history—including the two humorous stories of the gaol and the town-crier—as glibly as the list of the kings of England, the pronominal adjectives or the twenty-six prepositions governing the accusative.

Now when we see ourselves alluded to in print as "natives," a title only synonymous in the island mind with "Kanaka," when we read the description of the island character even to its most harmless and personal idiosyncrasy, when we see advertised by placard, poster or picture-book the subtle and elusive charm of our beloved island, clumsily analyzed and reduced to a formula like a doctor's prescription, we bow our heads in silent sorrow and in shame. But when the ready writer, having weathered a dry notheaster and a smoky sou'wester, and so having, as he thinks, caught the atmosphere, takes up his facile pen and essays the portraiture of our captains, we rise as one man in our wrath.

Even his starting point is imaginary, as he speaks familiarly of the "Captains' Club"—christened "Pacific Club" in the long ago when its members were chiefly "Cape Horners;" spoken of sometimes as the "House of Commons" during the existence of another club composed largely of ship-owners, and humorously dubbed the "House of Lords," but called by the islanders generally the "Cap'n's Room" and among the elect referred to briefly as "the Room." So Captains' Club, logical as it may appear, is not atmosphere at all—it's nothing but a "flaw."

Further, these acute observers often write of the captains as "battered old hulks." Now intimate experience with some of them leads one to reject the well-worn and literary phrase as quite inadequate even in times of peace; but let them once be seen and heard in any domestic or civic emergency, and "perfectly equipped modern torpedo boats" would be a more accurately descriptive simile.

However, this explosive force usually remains quiescent, giving no sign of its existence, since they are for the most part a peace-loving set now-a-days, and it is only when their principles are involved, or their prejudices attacked, that the habit of the quarter-deck resumes its sway and displays gifts of eloquence that Patrick Henry or Daniel Webster might well have envied. They are not even "ancient mariners." "Master Mariners" most assuredly; old, undoubtedly, but

ancient, never! not even at ninety-five! This notion, also, wide-spread but mistaken, should be corrected. The Captains do not speak a dialect. Though possibly their deepest meaning may not be quite apparent to the average off-island mind, yet almost anyone can understand what they say, and however metaphorical and picturesque their language may be, there is not a case on record of the use of the phrase "shiver my timbers" or "blast your eyes."

Moreover, they do not spend their time at the Room in spinning old yarns either for their own delight, or at the request of the ready writer, who frequently and patronizingly expresses his surprise at the "extent of their information."

"Information" indeed! Why, they made information! But for them, on many subjects there wouldn't be any information.

When these old boys were young boys, the island was seething with vigorous industry and daring ambition, sending its ships all over the world, and the children swung out into the stream very early in life. It was nothing uncommon for a boy to go to sea before he saw his teens, and one at least of our Captains learned his letters "off Cape Horn." Now it goes without saying that anything in the nature of information swallowed on a whaler off Cape Horn could be retained without difficulty for an indefinite period on shore. It was rather a severe sort of kindergarten that the little fellows attended, and there wasn't much playtime either until the long vacation, which most of them preferred to spend at their island home.

They have always dealt in raw material themselves, and now that the mellow rays of late afternoon fall tenderly about them, it is their privilege and their prerogative to criticize the manufacturers of a later generation; and for this office they are well qualified, both by wide experience and inherited shrewdness.

As they sit about the stove at the Room, three-quarters of the year with their feet on the rail and their eyes on the curling tobacco smoke, many a vital topic is discussed and theoretically settled forever; and many a character is assigned to its proper pigeon-hole, with utter lack of malice but with scientific accuracy. Occasionally a public man or private but ostentatious stranger is disposed of with the gently drawled remark "guess he can git over at low water," referring to the fact that only vessels of the lightest draught cross the harbor bar without reference to the state of the tide.

Upright, chivalrous, kindly if humorously tolerant, with the true repose and dignity of the man who knows because he has done it; faces deep-lined, strong and serene, eyes whose failing sight is yet keen enough to see straight through a pretender—as the Captains sit about the fire, or when summer lures them out to the sidewalk and they tilt back their chairs comfortably under the trees, exchanging friendly greetings with the passers-by, we, looking upon the little group and thinking how soon, alas, the time will come when not one of these splendid men will be left to tempt the ready writer with "copy," devoutly hope that henceforth this rash intruder will spend his vacations elsewhere, acquiring information upon subjects within his grasp, and so leave us for the short space remaining, in peace with our Captains upon the blessed island which by their presence they have made sacred to us forever.—*Mary E. Starbuck in Boston Evening Transcript.*

APRIL 6, 1901.

### WHALEBONE.

We often hear from some old seafaring friend an expression of wonder amounting almost to incredulity, as he meets with an item something like this in one of the New Bedford papers: "We hear of sales of five thousand pounds of Arctic whalebone for export at three dollars and ten cents a pound." His memory goes back to the time when he himself used to bring home cargoes of whale oil and bone from the Southern Banks, or the Tristan and Crozette Grounds, getting a very small price for the oil, and as for his share of the whalebone, he thought himself pretty fortunate if he got the odd ten cents on the pound for it, let alone the three dollars. He is thinking of the time and labor he has spent in securing so many tons of stuff, which hardly paid for the handling, when it was finally brought to market, and of the exceptionally big catch in the Lively Sally, which would have made him almost a millionaire, if the present price current had ruled in his younger days. And then follows a dissertation upon work and wages, with some philosophical reflections about these queer mutations in value, and the great law of supply and demand.

We can well remember the time when a large proportion of our whalers were fitted expressly in pursuit of the sperm whale, and when the owners and officers of such ships held all whalebone whales in contempt, as hardly worth wasting their time upon. Those who went on right-whaling voyages brought home the bone too, for it was worth something and served to eke out the earnings, enabling them to estimate the proceeds of the whole catch at a rate a few cents higher on a gallon. It was regarded as a kind of subordinate attachment to the oil, like the straw to the wheat, or the stover to the corn-crop, but who in those days could ever have supposed that the commercial value of the two commodities would be revolutionized? For the expensive and dangerous venture now being made into the Arctic regions by a comparatively few ships each summer, might well be called a voyage for bone and oil rather than for oil and bone.

Since our friend the ancient mariner ceased to vex distant seas in search of Leviathan, the business has declined, and the importation fallen off to a mere fraction of what it then was. Mother Earth has opened her treasures to us, and new illuminators and lubricators have come into market, so that the price of animal oils is still kept at a moderate figure. But new uses have been discovered for whalebone in certain arts and manufactures, and it does not appear that either earth or sea has furnished anything else possessing the peculiar properties of this substance. Unless a complete substitute for it shall be found, its price must continue to be high because the quantity produced or imported is so small. If our ancient friend but knew where he could now go and load his ship as quickly and easily as he once did the Lively Sally, his bonanza would be made; but he has learned of course that the ocean is wide, the voyages long, and the blanks far outnumber the prizes. Meanwhile the law of supply and demand continues inexorable as ever, and the conclusions reached by all thinking people would be very much like those of the old lady who had always observed that when eggs were up to the highest price, her hens obstinately refused to lay any, but just as soon as she could buy her eggs in market for ten cents a dozen, the industry of these same hens was something remarkable to behold.

### Gifts From Nantucket Whalemens to Their Women Folks.

From the New York Times.

Some of the gifts the Nantucket seamen made for their women folk a hundred years ago when Nantucket Island was one of the world's leading whaling ports, are to be seen at the fourth annual exhibition of American folk arts. The exhibition is sponsored by the National Committee on Folk Arts of the United States at the committee's headquarters, 673 Fifth Ave.

The gifts made by the men on their long voyages include thimble cases, pie cutters, decorated corset bones and even rolling pins. One of them is a picture made of delicately matched pink and white shells with the words "Think of Me" written in the center. It was made by a sailor for his sweetheart. He died before the trip was finished, but his friends, in reverence to his memory, took the picture to the girl, only to find that she had married some one else.

The sea and its life enter into almost all the handicrafts of the island. When the men modeled, they modeled wild sea birds, whales or whaling boats; when they painted, they painted boats and whaling expeditions. Even the women were influenced, and the sea shell motive is to be seen in most of the quilts.

Nov. 23, 1935

**EVENING WHALING—Lively Experience of a Former Nantucket Shipmaster.**—One of our former residents and former whaling captains sends us the following account of one of his experiences while in the whaling service, which will, perhaps, prove interesting to our readers:

On the fifth day of February, 1831, over fifty-four years ago, being near the Kingsmill Group of Islands, in the Pacific Ocean, in a good ship from Nantucket, in company with two English ships, we saw a school of whales distant two miles at sunset. It being calm we lowered three boats, and soon were fast to three different whales. Eight boats came from the English ships, and they all got fast, making eleven boats fast to eleven whales. Now it was dark and cloudy. The whales (fast and loose ones) all came together in a small space so we could speak to one another. Our lines all got across and afoul, and we could not tell where the whale was that we were fast to. The English lines were one size larger than ours. When we had a large line across the head of the boat, we cut it to clear ourselves, and I suppose the English did the same, as I soon found I was cut loose. I made my line fast to another harpoon, and threw it into the first whale I came to, and he went into his flurry and soon turned up dead. I lighted my boat lantern, hauled up alongside the whale, and found a harpoon on his top side, with a short piece of English line fast to it. I said to myself that my father was taken prisoner with a cargo of sperm oil by the English in the war of 1812, and now was my chance to get a little of it back; so with my boat knife I cut the harpoon out, and cast it into the deep and put one of my harpoons into the same hole. Each one of our boats got a whale, and towed them to the ship in a calm and in darkness. One of the English captains boarded us the next day, and brought about fifty fathoms of our lines, pretty well cut up, and reported that they got seven whales between the two English ships. There is only one person living on Nantucket at this time who was in that night whaling affair.

May 2, 1885

May 23, 1885



## "Whaleship Mail" Now Sought By Collectors.

From The New York Times.

In search of unexplored by-paths in their trend to specialization, a few stamp collectors have discovered in ships' letters a fascinating field of original covers—stamped and unstamped. Especially is the new-found interest centered upon whaling letters. The hunt is on at Nantucket, New Bedford, New London, and other erstwhile home ports of the golden age of whaling, during the century or more prior to 1860.

There are several theories as to what has caused the sudden rise of this sub-hobby, aside from the proverbial lure for stamp collectors of any field that is sown with rarities and the unique. The revival of interest in whaling history and records may have something to do with it. But the majority opinion holds that the enthusiasm is a logical sequence to the collectors' craze for modern covers, post-marked on pioneer aeronautic flights over the Atlantic and Pacific, or carried on the maiden voyages of record-breaking transatlantic liners.

The unusual circumstances of whaleship voyages account for the novelties which give zest to this branch of collecting. Sailing ships, cruising from New England ports to the whaling grounds of the Pacific, and even to the Arctic, were habitually absent for intervals of three to four years. Communication with the home offices and with the families of officers and crew thus presented a very special responsibility. The problem was solved only by the development of a cooperative system whereby each whaleship became, in effect, a volunteer mail boat, carrying on the outward voyages bags of mail for all craft likely to be encountered en route and, in turn, dispatching correspondence for Yankee homekeepers by homeward-bound craft bespoken in the South Seas or the Orient.

It is the superscriptions on the correspondence sheets—fold to make covers—which lend distinctive atmosphere to this class of covers. Most of the specimens, of course, antedate postage stamps. Not only that, but, in many instances, there are no postmarks, no franking impressions, or penned notations of postage paid. On the other hand, there are the acknowledgment notations that give the flavor of the reciprocal service of the seven seas. For example, the penned endorsement "Kindness of Captain—" or "Via ship—".

This branch of collecting provides its own categories of rarities, and collectors have not been long in discovering these "limited editions". Just as signatures of signers of the Declaration of Independence vary so sharply in supply, so it appears that certain whaleships, for one season or another, fetched and carried fewer letters than the average, with consequent scarcity for collectors to come.

A class which is arousing the highest interest among collectors is made up of autographic covers, originating on the whaleships, which made the first leg of the journey home on ships encountered en route and, upon arrival of the carrier at the nearest port, were placed in the mails.

The specialists are already making a still hunt for the one most valuable species of whaleship letters—those which bore evidence of deposit in the "Cape Horn Postoffice", or the "Barrell Postoffice". At the height of whaling operations in the Pacific when scores of blubber-hunters were rounding the Horn but with grave uncertainties of making contact with their kind, here was evolved a scheme whereby mail clearing houses were established on islands where a large proportion of the whalers called for water or supplies.

Aug. 21, 1937

## Sperm Oil Candles.

In last week's Inquirer and Mirror it was noted that the sperm whale candles now being made in Nantucket are from whale oil. This is a misstatement as whale oil was never used for candles, which are made of spermacetti, a milky wax which is obtained from the head or case of the sperm whale. Whale oil is obtained from the blubber of the right whale or bowhead, sperm, and other whales. The right whale is a cold water animal found in the Polar regions, whereas the sperm whale is a warm water animal found in the temperate zone and yields not only whale oil, which was used in lamps, but the more valuable spermacetti used for making the finest candles ever produced.

Joseph Amrein.

Sept. 10, 1949

## Whaling Museum Receives Odd Conception of a Whale Hunt.

The Nantucket Whaling Museum has recently been presented with an original black-and-white drawing of a whale hunt. It is a most unusual whaling scene and was drawn by John Averill. A letter to President Charles E. Congdon, of the Historical Association, explains the gift as follows:

George Bijur \* Inc.

9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York.  
October 16, 1937.

Director, Whaling Museum,  
Nantucket, Mass.

Dear Sir:

As an annual summerer-at-Nantucket for many years past and one who has spent many delightful hours in the Museum, I thought you might be interested in the enclosed picture of a whaling scene drawn by John Averill, of Chicago, for a recent magazine advertisement.

It is, so far as I know, the first time a prominent modern artist has imaginatively recreated and interpreted the old whaling saga in 1937 terms.

And just as the pioneer New England artists turned not to realism in designing their quaintly fascinating prints, but to the whaling scene as they imagined it, this modern interpretation seemed to us especially interesting as an expression of what the whaling adventure seems like to a pictorial historian of the present day.

It occurred to us that you might like to have in the museum the original drawing from which this printed proof was made, and that it would show an interesting contrast between the old and the new ways of depicting the whale-hunt; that it would make an additional feature of interest to visitors, many of whom know and admire John Averill.

If you would like to include this rather valuable drawing in your collection, I am empowered on behalf of our clients, the Mutual Broadcasting System, to offer you the original drawing, free of charge, as a permanent gift for your museum. There is of course no advertising matter whatsoever on the drawing.

The sole stipulation would be that Mutual be allowed to borrow the picture for a few weeks at the time the next exhibition of modern advertising art is held, at which time, we believe, the Committee on Selection may want to hang it as one of the 100 best drawings of the year.

If you will let us know your wishes, we should be glad to have the picture framed as you may specify. The size of the original is 13 1-2 inches by 10 1-2 inches. We should suggest as label simply a brass tag stating "Whale Hunt, By John Averill, donated October, 1937, by the Mutual Broadcasting System."

Sincerely yours,

George Bijur,

President.

Jan. 15, 1938

## Nantucket's Commemoration Of Melville's 125th Anniversary.

Through the sponsorship of the Historical Association, Nantucket had the honor of being the only place in America to observe the 125th anniversary of the birth of Herman Melville, the American writer whose story of "Moby Dick" has become a world classic.

Commemoration exercises were held on Tuesday afternoon at the Whaling Museum, with some two hundred persons crowding the available space and many others regretfully turned away due to lack of accommodations.

The exercises were featured by the presence of Mrs. Eleanor Melville Metcalf, granddaughter of the writer, and her all too brief talk was an inspiration to the appreciative audience. She had brought with her some mementoes of her grandfather—his pipe, quill pen, daguerreotypes (one of his friend "Toby," (whom he made famous in "Typee"), and other heirlooms. These, with photographs of a Melville portrait, and of favorite seascapes of the writer, were arranged most attractively by Albert N. Tucker.

Dr. William E. Gardner, Chairman of the Whaling Museum, acted as the master of ceremonies, and in his opening remarks he gave a brief synopsis of the world of Melville's young manhood. He then introduced Edouard A. Stackpole, of Nantucket, who gave an informal address on Melville's early adventures and the part which whaling played in the literal and mystical construction of "Moby Dick." The speaker touched also upon Melville's full understanding of the part this island had played in the history of whaling.

Mrs. Metcalf was then introduced and responded to her enthusiastic reception with an address which was as charming as her presence was gracious. She gave glimpses of her remembrances of her grandfather, and her account at once made him very real to her listeners. She gave a comprehensive account of the long years of his literary struggles following the publication of "Moby Dick," and she read excerpts from "Mardi" and the classic of the White Whale. Upon the conclusion of her talk she was greeted with sustained applause.

Dr. Gardner then brought the exercises to a close by telling of the broadcast which had been recorded on Nantucket on Sunday, for sending over the airwaves on this Tuesday—Melville's birthday—so that the message of the man and his work went out from this island across to other lands—including Russia where, in Moscow, the Institute of World Literature was also holding commemoration exercises in honor of this American genius.

1944



## Illustrated Whaling Lecture at the Methodist Church.

William H. Tripp, Curator of the New Bedford Whaling Museum, gave an interesting talk on "Whaling, Past and Present," last Monday evening at the Methodist Church. The talk was illustrated by some fine stereopticon slides, some of which Mr. Tripp had prepared from his own snap-shots.

The speaker of the evening was introduced by William F. Macy, President of the Nantucket Historical Association. Mr. Macy said, in part:

"It is always a pleasure for me to introduce Mr. Tripp. We have worked together many years. Mr. Tripp has made a study of whaling and knows his subject thoroughly, and I know that you will enjoy listening to him."

Before showing any slides, Mr. Tripp read a few excerpts from William F. Macy's "Story of Old Nantucket," so that those in the audience not familiar with the island's history might have a general idea of the rise and fall of the whaling industry here. Whaling began here in boats from shore some time after it began on Long Island. The Nantucketers, however, began to go further and further off shore in their small vessels, until, during the first half of the eighteenth century they became the leaders in the American industry. Before the Revolution the island held the leading whaling port in the world. While the Revolution and the War of 1812 destroyed Nantucket's whaling fleet in both cases the islanders "came back" to lead the world in the industry. In 1842, the high-water mark of the island's palmy days was reached. The bar across the harbor mouth; the fire of 1846; the California gold rush, and the discovery of petroleum dealt the island blows from which her great industry never recovered.

The first slide flashed on the screen was a picture of "Old Glory." Mr. Tripp exclaimed: "We little realize how much the nation owes to the whalers. They made our flag respected when they carried it to all the known seas on their voyages. The first time the Stars and Stripes were flown in English waters, following the Revolution, they flew from the mast-head of the whaleship "Bedford," Captain Mooers, of Nantucket."

Then followed a series of interesting views, showing the phase of the industry; the men at mast-head, looking for whales; the lowering of boats; "fastening" to a whale; cutting in alongside; trying out the oil; etc. A great many of the slides were taken from old prints, showing old-time whaling.

Views of New Bedford wharves during the seventies, when the camera recorded many old ships and scenes, proved outstanding, as did views of several fine old whaleships, including the "Niger," (Capt. Charles Grant, of Nantucket, in command—the father of George Grant at the whaling museum here); the "Wanderer," a survivor of the great American whaling fleets.

The start of the last voyage of the bark "Wanderer," one of the last two square-riggers out of New Bedford, was graphically portrayed by lantern-slides from photos taken by Mr. Tripp himself. One view showed the good old craft being towed down New Bedford harbor; another showing her at anchor in Buzzards Bay; a third, with the crew on board, ready to sail; and then several views of the craft after she had been driven ashore on Cuttyhunk during a severe gale that night.

The "Charles W. Morgan" was also shown to good effect in various views. He gave several interior and exterior views of the New Bedford whaling museum and Seaman's Bethel on Johnnycake Hill.

Views of the great "Stone Fleet"—that fleet of whaleships that sailed out of New Bedford in 1861, laden with stone, and sunk in the Confederate harbors of Atlanta and Savannah to stop the blockade runners; and also that of the whaling fleet trapped in the Arctic ice in 1871, were among Mr. Tripp's slides.

The "John R. Manta," a schooner, the last whaling craft to sail out of New Bedford, made her last voyage as an American whaler in 1925, and Mr. Tripp spent part of that voyage on board the "Manta." Here again, his camera was a valuable ally, and he showed several fine snaps of the cruise.

Modern whaling, as carried on by the Norwegians, was also described by Mr. Tripp. The contrast between the old and the new was well demonstrated by the slides; the modern bomb guns as contrasted with the old harpoons; the small, tugs called "killer boats," with bomb gun on the bow; the "mother ship" with the great channels in the bow or stern up which the whales were dragged. The industry is chiefly carried on in the Antarctic and one of the Norwegian ships shown was the "C. W. Larsen," afterwards known as the "City of New York," and used by Admiral Bryd on his first expedition to the Bay of Whales. Another old craft used by Byrd in his present expedition, was the "Bear of Oakland." Mr. Tripp's slide showed the "Bear" as she looked when she sailed in the ice-floes of the Arctic seas many years ago.

The lecture was diversified enough to please those who knew a little about whaling and at the same time explained the processes of the industry so that the average listener could understand the important details.

Aug. 14, 1934

## Talk on "Nantucket Rambles" Presented The "Neighbors."

A capacity audience was on hand at Bennett Hall on Tuesday evening to hear Edouard Stackpole, Nantucket author and President of the Nantucket Historical Association, speak on the subject "Nantucket Rambles."

In his preliminary remarks, Mr. Stackpole stated that the pros and cons of Nantucket as a summer resort go back for at least 109 years, and that Harper's Magazine in 1860 described the town as "sleeping," as well it might have been since nearly 500 men had gone off to California and a recent extensive fire had burned out the business section.

After pointing out several erroneous impressions that have been given by various writers describing early Nantucket and whaling, the speaker declared that conjectures are often passed along as recorded fact. He went on to illustrate how much of the island's history is hidden in the letters and journals of the older day, and that the reticence of the Quakers and whalers to keep diaries and other written records has been a serious handicap to those seeking the story of the times.

He then went on to give various bits of unwritten Nantucket history; the early use of the island by Mayhew; the meeting of Herman Melville and Capt. George Pollar, of the ill-fated *Essex*, together with an earlier meeting of Melville with the son of Owen Chase, and the Nantucket part of "Moby Dick;" the migration of island whalers with William Rotch to Dunkirk, and a similar migration with Samuel Starbuck to Milford Haven in Wales; Dr. Ben Tupper's visit to Paris; Capt. Timothy Folger and his trip to Paris, and many other glimpses into the island's storied past.

Mr. Stackpole brought his talk to a close by recounting the discovery of the continent of Antarctica by a sealing schooner's master in 1821. He asserted that this discovery is the earliest recorded recognition of that portion of the Antarctic land as being part of the great unknown continent.

It was truly a "Nantucket Night" and much enjoyed by the Neighbors.

—J. R. B.

Aug. 4, 1948

## "The Story of the American Merchant Marine."

Every person who a year ago enjoyed reading "The Story of New England Whalers," by John R. Spears, which volume possessed a deep interest to all Nantucketers, owing to the fact that nearly one-third of it dealt with the past history of this island, will be glad to know that Mr. Spears has continued his research along these lines, and has just published an equally valuable and interesting work on "The Story of the American Merchant Marine," which is one of the best productions yet issued in connection with the history and growth of the nation's maritime interests.

Mr. Spears commences this story away back in the year 1607, when the first vessel was built in the United States—a crude little pinnacle of some thirty tons which was named the Virginia—and he carries the reader through the early growth of the country's shipping, including the fisherman, the smuggler and the pirate, presenting such a vast amount of valuable information that it is difficult, if not impossible, for the reader to properly digest it all the first time he peruses the story.

In describing the condition of the merchant marine before the revolution, Mr. Spears writes as follows regarding the introduction of the whale fishery on Nantucket:

"It was in 1712 that Capt. Christopher Hussey, while off Nantucket, in an open boat, looking for whales, was blown away to sea, where he killed a sperm whale, the profitable sale of which led the people of his famous home island to go cruising in deep water for more whales of the kind. The growth of the fishery that followed was swift. In 1730 Nantucket alone had twenty-five deep-water whalers, and they brought home oil and bone that sold for 3,200 pounds. In the meantime the islanders had begun sending their products directly to London, thus establishing a new line of trade. With the increase of profits came an extension of the territory where the search for whales was made. In 1751 they went to Disco island, in the mouth of Baffin's bay. In 1763 they were found on the coast of Guinea (looking for whales and ignoring the slave trade), and that, too, in spite of the wars that had covered the seas with pirates. In 1767 no less than fifty whalers crossed the equator 'by way of experiment.' That statement is perhaps the most significant of any that can be made of the fishery. Nantucket alone owned 125 whalers in 1770; they were, on the average, 93 tons' burden in size, and in the course of the year they brought home 14,331 barrels of oil worth \$358,200 as soon as landed."

In the portion of his book referring to the "privateers," Mr. Spears writes: "Out of the 1,700 men who manned Nantucket whalers before the war, some hundreds shipped on the privateers. They took kindly to the calling in which there was such a strong element of chance. The hope of good luck was strong within them. When an American privateer was captured by the enemy, they separated the Nantucket men from the remainder of the crew, and then by bribery on the one hand, and starvation and other kinds of ill treatment, on the other, they forced as many as possible into the English whaleships."

We have merely quoted the above from "The Story of the American Merchant Marine," to show that the book possesses peculiar attractive features to the people of Nantucket. Besides this, Mr. Spears, in outlining the growth of the packet lines, clippers, and the development of steam navigation, presents a very valuable historic treatise in the shape of a most interesting story. The book, which is handsomely illustrated, is published by the Macmillan Company, 66 Fifth avenue, New York, and sells for \$1.50.

March 26, 1910



## Scrimshonting.

What does that mean? we seem to hear our younger readers inquire, having about as much idea as our ancestors had of such words as "filibustering," and "bull-dozing," now so commonly met with in the newspapers of the day. By way of explanation we quote a couple of stanzas from that curious old log of the ship Dauphin, written in verse, by the late Charles Murphey, which has now, after the lapse of more than fifty years, found its way into print:

"Now, having fitted well our ship  
To pass Cape Horn again,  
Each man, both fore and aft the ship,  
Scrimshonting did begin.

"Then knitting-sheaths and jaggings-knives  
Were cut in every form,  
With other trinkets for the girls,  
As presents from Cape Horn."

Here the younger generation are furnished with a key to the signification of a word which is familiar enough to every old or middle-aged Nantucketer. To scrimshont was to exercise one's ingenuity and taste in the manufacture of curious and beautiful things, generally, however, combining some sort of utility with their beauty, and the word "scrimshonting" might be classed as a participial substantive, which, in its general sense, comprised all manner of cunning work and articles of vertu. What an ugly word! what an awful queer word! says little Miss Pert. But we ask is it any more queer than "decalcomanie" which you understand well enough, and which, also, you apply to pretty things?

Concerning its derivation and etymology, we confess ourselves in the dark. We have heard it argued that the word is of Chinese origin, because the Celestials have a taste themselves for this kind of fudging industry, and this has a plausible sound, especially as to the last two syllables of it. "Scrim-Shon-Ting" has the right flavor on the tongue, and it strikes us that we have seen something very like it on a tea-chest, somewhere. Another theory which has many supporters is, that "scrimshonting" is a contraction and corruption of "screaming and shouting," as our foremothers, when they were young and giddy girls, used to do, at sight of the beautiful things brought from round Cape Horn by their sailor-lovers. But we must leave the question open for research, our ponderous Unabridged ignores the word entirely, and the Marine Vocabulary is equally silent. In short, neither Noah Webster nor Nat Bowditch has condescended to throw any light upon the subject. But we need not their help to tell us its meaning, for we oldsters know "just as easy,"—as the boy knew his father. For it was, with us, not merely a nauticism, but a household word.

As stated in the verses quoted above, the "scrimshonting" began when the ship was homeward bound. Many old shipmasters did not permit the crew to employ themselves in this way while on the whaling-grounds, thinking they would give too much time and attention to it, thereby neglecting other duties, more directly connected with the true interests of the voyage. But, on those long voyages, there were necessarily many idle hours, during which the mariner must find something to do to kill time. Despite the old adage, time was not always money, but was sometimes a drug in the market. Ivory and whitebone from the sperm whale, whalebone from the right whale, marine shells and many curious and beautiful varieties of hard wood from the far-away islands of the Pacific, furnished material for the exercise of much ingenuity, while there were always to be found among a ship's company, two or three men who possessed a talent

## Our Old Occupation.

We still feel a strong interest—at least all the elderly portion of our people do—in the business which, in the days of our youth, was the pride and glory of our island, and which directly or indirectly furnished the livelihood for nearly all of our then numerous population. Therefore a few words of comment upon the facts embodied in the annual Review of the Whale Fishery, by our old townsman, Raymond, of the *Whaleman's Shipping List*, noticed by us recently, may not be amiss to the Nantucket readers, even in these degenerate days.

It appears that the number of vessels employed in this business, has shown a slight increase from year to year in the last three annual statements, and that during the year just ended, 1877, the increase has been really noteworthy. Do these figures show that the business, in its decline, has really touched bottom and begun to rise again? If such be the case, we may almost dare to cherish the hope of living to see it resuscitated here, and to see our young men employed in the calling followed by their ancestors. But if we expect people who have money to invest it in whaling, it becomes us to be as severely practical as Gradgrind himself. Given, a certain number of ships, and another certain number of barrels of oil obtained, what have we for an average?

As the increase of the fleet shows no increase, we are told, in the catch, of course the average must be less, while the price obtained shows a natural reduction. But Gradgrind himself must admit that both these circumstances might be accidental and temporary, and thus be unsafe to base predictions upon.

It is worthy of note that nearly all the ships added to the whaling fleet in 1877, have been new ones built expressly for the business, for it is said by those who ought to know, that it pays better to build a new vessel and have just what is wanted, than to buy an old merchantman and make the requisite alterations and repairs. Thus the average quality and condition of the vessels employed, as well as their number, shows an encouraging advance.

The practice of cruising on grounds in the Atlantic Ocean near home and convenient to ports of shipment, so as to send home the oil after each short cruise, is something novel to our whalemen of the old school, who made long voyages and carried their all under their feet the whole length and breadth of the great Pacific, in most cases without even a dollar of insurance. For if the whaleman wants his lay of the catchings insured, he must do so at his own expense, while we believe the rule is that when it is trans-shipped into another bottom, the owners must insure it for him. But it would appear that this practice of frequent shipments home to secure immediate returns has been overdone, as we now hear a complaint of increased expenses, more vexations from frequent changes of officers and crew, by reason of discharge or desertion, and low prices of oil, especially of sperm oil, showing the market to be temporarily overstocked. Orders are being sent to shipmasters to keep their oil at sea, and save the expense of freight and re-insurance.

The more distant whaling grounds appear to be almost entirely abandoned by whalemen. We hear of no cruising "on Japan," where we Nantucketers, in our prosperous day, secured great "cuts," and very few are heard from cruising "on New Zealand." The question occurs to us whether these distant seas, after being neglected

for a short series of years, may not be worked again with profitable success? We know that the whale is a long-lived animal and that the natural increase is slow, but as it is pretty certain that sperm whales migrate long distances from one quarter of the ocean to another, may not those which are so constantly hunted on the grounds where the fleets of ships now congregate, be driven back to their old haunts?

And although all the ships which came out safe from Behring's Straits made a successful season's work, we do not hear that any whaling vessel has for several years past visited the Sea of Okotsk. This sea was, not many years since, swarming with both right and polar whales, and considering its limited extent, perhaps no whaling ground yielded richer returns. Is it likely ever to be explored again by American whalers?

Southern right whaling has been revived with good success, the chief incentive to this movement being the great value of whalebone, so that a barrel of right whale oil, with its corresponding accompaniment of bone, is really worth more than a barrel of sperm. This sounds odd enough to us who remember when our old ships brought cargoes from the Brazil Banks and the Tristan Ground, selling the oil for twenty to twenty-five cents a gallon, while the whalebone was hardly worth the labor of securing and cleaning it. It is observable that the quantity of bone now imported is small in proportion to the quantity of oil. But this is doubtless due to the fact that the figures returned as whale oil, include humpback oil and also walrus oil, which forms a large part of the catch of the Arctic fleet, and with which no whalebone is obtained.

On the whole, it seems plain enough that the business of whaling is not likely ever to assume its former proportions or even to be increased to any great extent. It may still give fair returns to a comparatively small number of ships, though, as an old veteran at our elbow remarks, on reading the figures, "there seems to be a good deal of *skimming sticks* about it now-a-days."

FEBRUARY 2, 1878.

Rev. F. C. Ewer has presented to the Athenaeum Museum a fac-simile sketch of a wood cut made in Paris in 1574, representing the ideas of a whaling scene in those days. The sketch was made by Mrs. Ewer, and is nicely executed. The whale as conceived in the picture has nearly the true shape, excepting the head, which is small and tapering, looking similar to that of a rabbit with ears laid back. It can be seen in the library room, where it will be left a short time.

June 6, 1877

## SELLING OFF FOR CASH. WHALEBONE SKIRT HOOPS

Of every imaginable variety may be obtained cheap for cash at the old stand, 110 Federal street. Having paid particular attention to the selection of stock and the manufacturing of WHALEBONE for the last fifteen years, we now offer to our numerous customers, at Wholesale and retail, Dress Whalebone Sets for Skirts, in the greatest variety, embracing at least one thousand styles, variously adapted in finish and style to the present wants of our patrons, to meet the wants of the humblest and wishes of the wealthiest persons who may favor us by leaving their orders with us for any kind of goods that may be made of whalebone. Whalebone is admitted by all to be the best article of flexibility, durability, utility and cheapness that can be obtained for a lady's ward robe. At the sign of THE SPERM WHALE, JAW.

110 Federal Street, Boston.  
J. A. SEVEY.

WHALING STATIONS.—Two whaling stations have been established the past week—one on Smith's Point Island, the other on the west side of Tuckernuck. The one on Smith's Point is manned by George E. Coffin, Peter Scott, Joseph P. Gardner, Joseph Lumbert, John Scott, John Taylor, Thomas B. Hoy, John Handrick, Everett Coffin, William A. Barrett, Timothy Dunham, George Dunham. The one on Tuckernuck is manned by Manuel Francis, Edward Barrett, Washington I. Fisher, Joseph Williams, Albert Dunham, Arthur Dunham, John C. Spicer, Charles Brooks, John McCullough, — Crowell, William Morris, Arthur Barrett and Justin Thomas making two boats' crews at each station. The men ship on regular "lays" as on shipboard and are provisioned while on duty. The New Bedford *Mercury* says that the whaling station established at Tuckernuck, has been named the McCullough whaling station. John McCullough and Capt. Joseph Vera of New Bedford furnished the supplies, and Capt. Vera will superintend the business.

Apr. 14, 1887

TO BE SUSPENDED.—After the issue of the 30th inst. the *Whalemen's Shipping List and Merchants' Transcript* will pass out of existence. The paper was established and first printed Feb. 17th, 1843, by Henry Lindsey, and on his death, in the last part of the year 1853, it passed into the possession of Benjamin Lindsey, who continued it until November, 1873, when it was purchased by Eben P. Raymond, its present proprietor. Mr. Raymond had charge of the paper from 1861 to the time of purchasing it. In consequence of the civil war and decline of the whaling industry the paper continued to decrease in prosperity, and for the past six years it has been partly supported by assistance from merchants and ship owners at home and abroad. This aid will not be extended longer, and the paper will therefore be suspended. Mr. Raymond has worked hard for many years to make the paper successful, and has done far better than most men would under like conditions. He is now compelled by partial blindness and ill-health, together with advancing age, to relinquish work.

## Old Hawaii Prized Whale Tooth Highly

HONOLULU — In Hawaii's early days the floral necklace, leis, which are symbols of love and friendship, were usually made of the orange ilima flower, the feathery red ohia, malle leaves or ferns. But they were made also of carved shells, yellow fruits of the pandanus tree, bears carved from walrus tusks, and bright feathers. The most treasured ornament, worn only by persons of high rank, was a whale's tooth. Carved in the form of a hook, it was hung on many fine strings of braided human hair.

Salem News  
Oct. 4, 1956



## "THAR SHE BLOWS"

It was Dec. 30, 1840. The ship Acushnet lay in the river of the same name at New Bedford signing on her crew for a voyage to the Pacific whaling grounds.

With a hinterland where railroads were building, with deep water channels and no shallow bar of sand across her harbor's mouth, New Bedford was seizing the lead in that profitable business of oil and bone, which her island cousin of Nantucket had perfected. The Acushnet tugged at her moorings in the stream. A brown-haired, dark-complexioned youth stood quietly in the cabin waiting his turn to be called. When the ship's officer nodded to him, the youth stepped forward and wrote his name on the "list of persons" on the ship's articles. The name was Herman Melville.

Eighteen months later the Acushnet was in the South Pacific and anchored in the Marquesas. A water party went ashore, and with it went Melville and Richard Tobias Greene.

Persecuted by a tyrant skipper and lured by the tropical charm of Nukahiva, the two young seamen jumped ship. For a while they lived among friendly natives. Then they were captured by cannibals and kept prisoner for four months. The crew of an Australian vessel finally rescued them, and two years later Melville returned to New York as sailor in a man-o'-war.

Out of that voyage came Typee, Omoo, White Jacket and, greatest of all, Moby Dick. There were few, 100 years ago, who saw this greatness. The world as a whole was to wait 70 years and more before it realized that the story of the white whale was one of its literary masterpieces. Critics with sharp blubber knives are still busy "cutting into" Moby Dick and "trying out" the precious oil. Others marvel anew as they reread the tale. But few are they who read at all who now do not know of Capt Ahab with the ivory leg, Queequeg with the tomahawk pipe, the long harpoon and the embalmed head from New Zealand, and all that crew of "red, white, yellow, black and dusky men" who sailed aboard the whaler Pequod. Whaling voyage and voyage of a soul!

To create Capt Ahab, Melville drew in part upon the captain of the Acushnet, who had driven him to desertion. Skippers of Yankee whalers were a hard lot, for the life of the whale fisheries was a hard life. Only the thrill and danger experienced in a whaleboat fast to a whale—"a Nantucket sleigh ride," they called it—kept men away from their homes for three to four years at a time, overworked, poorly fed and paid only in shares of oil.

Profits provided the ships: adventure, the crews to man them. New England whalesmen of the offshore fisheries sailed where nought had sailed before. Undiscovered islands in the Pacific they found and charted. They knew the sea and the coast of Japan before Perry. The bluff bows of their barks and brigs plowed north into the Bering Sea and south to Antarctica.

Many of their exploits lie in their old log books in museums and private collections, cataloged, but yet uncleaned. Memorable voyages and great disasters such as that in '71 when 30 whalers were crushed in Arctic ice, have been duly recorded. The great novel of the whale has been written, but not yet his full history.

On Nantucket island, a country newspaper printer and local historian has set out to write that history. It is to be called "The New England Whaleman: Discoverer and Explorer." Edouard A. Stackpole has never seen the Pacific, yet he knows the "far reaches of the great ocean" as well as he knows his way down North Liberty st. and Main to the office of the Inquirer and Mirror.

"My chief qualification," he wrote the Guggenheim Foundation seeking a fellowship, "is my proven interest in the subject. My ancestors were among the early whalesmen in the Pacific. Their heritage is one of my cherished possessions."

Judges of the Guggenheim Foundation have found the venture sound enough to risk the capital. In August historian Stackpole sets sail on his life's chief voyage. The year was 1851 when Herman Melville finished Moby Dick. The year 1951 promises still another great account of the whale fisheries and of America in what was perhaps her most heroic age.

UNCLE DUDLEY.

Apr. 16, 1951  
Boston Globe

### "The Nantucket Pilgrimage" of The Newcomen Society.

The Newcomen Society of England, American Branch, held its "Annual Pilgrimage" this year in Nantucket. Arriving on Thursday, the various members of the Society made their headquarters the Sea Cliff Inn, where a banquet was held on that evening.

The presiding officer, Dr. Charles E. Penrose, Senior Vice President for North America, introduced several of the distinguished guests, among whom were Col. C. E. Davies, of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, a Past-President of British Newcomen. The member coming from the most distant point, however, was Robert L. Wood, Jr., of San Francisco, Secretary of the Pacific Coast Committee. Mr. Wood, Sr., was also present.

The grace and closing prayer were given by Rev. Bradford Johnson, of St. Paul's Church, Nantucket. Alcon Chadwick, Treasurer of the New England Committee, proposed the toast to the President of the United States, and Rudolph C. Dick, President of the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company, of Salem, proposed the toast to Britain's King, George VI.

The Society had devoted the evening to the honor of Old Nantucket. The speaker for the occasion was Edouard A. Stackpole, who selected "William Rotch, America's Pioneer in International Industry" as his topic.

The address had been printed in a most attractive booklet by the Society, and distributed not only to the members present but to the 10,000 members of the Society throughout North America.

Albert E. Marshall, Chairman of the Rhode Island branch of Newcomen, and a summer resident of Nantucket for many years, upon being introduced read a short essay, written by Mrs. Marshall, a few hours before, which summarized in the best possible way, the sentiment of the true appeal of Nantucket:

"Finding ourselves involved in a mainland life of speed and demands on ourselves for efficiency in our daily tasks, we lack the leisure and peace our forebears enjoyed here on Nantucket when they rested between voyages.

"As a worried business man may, in his day-dreams, return in thought to his boyhood days, irrespective of where they were lived, some of us may be fortunate enough to gather together souvenirs of the olden days and impart our lives under the softening haze of happy illusions.

"So, on this island of Nantucket, some of us, forgetting the present, try to live part of our lives in the leisure and peace which our forefathers enjoyed."

Many inquiries as to the Newcomen Society, its purposes and accomplishments, may be answered by reprinting from the Newcomen booklet:

"Broadly, this British Society has as its purposes: to increase an appreciation of American-British traditions and ideals in the Arts and Sciences, especially in that bond of sympathy for the cultural and spiritual forces which are common to the two countries; and, secondly, to serve as another link in the intimately friendly relations existing between Great Britain and the United States.

"The Newcomen Society centers its work in the history of Material Civilization, the history of: Industry, Invention, Engineering, Transportation, the Utilities, Communication, Mining, Agriculture, Finance, Banking, Economics, Education and the Law—these and correlated historical fields. In short, the background of those factors which have contributed or are contributing to the progress of Mankind."

During three decades, American Newcomen has honored numerous industries both in the United States and Canada. This 1950 Pilgrimage of the Society was in honor of the whaling industry of Nantucket, and the men who made this port famous throughout the world.

July 1, 1950



## WHALEMEN'S OUTFITS

GEO. R. PIERCE & CO.

HAVE JUST RECEIVED

Heavy Pilot Cloths Heavy Satinets

VERMONT GRAY CASSIMERES,

ALL WOOL KERSEYS,

STRIPED SHIRTINGS, DUCKS,

Denims, Long Woollen Stockings,

WHALEMEN'S PUMPS,

SOUTHWESTERN MATTERESSES, BLANKETS, &c

which will be sold at prices to suit the times—and  
Terms Liberal

1853

### METALLIC LIFE

## WHALE BOATS.

THE FRANCIS METALLIC LIFE BOAT CO., of  
New York have perfected the necessary  
machinery for the manufacture of

WHALE BOATS,

and are prepared to furnish those of most approved model, made of Galvanized Iron or Copper.

The great economy and advantage of CORRUGATED METAL for Boats, has been fully demonstrated the past seven years by ACTUAL SERVICE in all departments of Government and the Mercantile Marine generally.

The Metallic Boat if jammed or otherwise injured by accident is more easily repaired than wood. Heat, dampness, and worms have no effect upon them, and they are always tight and ready for use in case of emergency—while the wooden boat deteriorates by disuse and age, the Metallic Boat increases in value as the paint becomes hardened by exposure to the weather.

Orders for Whale Boats, and Boats of every description will be received by

J. N. SCHELLINGER,

Agent to the Company,

Nov 28—6 mos.

Sag Harbor.

1854

### PILOT BREAD.

2000 POUNDS fresh baked Pilot Bread, a good article received from New York; and for sale by

GORHAM MACY.

1850

### LETTER BAGS.

Bark Anacondi, of New Bedford, Capt. Thos. Lawrence, will sail for the Pacific Ocean about the middle of November. Letter Bag at the store of Bates, Cook & Co.

### RETURNED LETTERS.

By ship Martha, of Fairhaven, Capt. Skinner, are at the Store of Justin Lawrence.  
By ship Phocion, Capt. Nichols, are at the store of Bates, Cook & Co.

1852

### WHALEMEN'S SHIPPING OFFICE.

THE subscriber has made arrangements for shipping men for the Whaling business, and being well acquainted with the "VINEYARD WHALEMEN," will cheerfully furnish any information respecting officers, mechanics, boatsteers &c.

Any persons wishing to sail from this or neighboring ports will do well to apply to me. Owners and Agents of ships in the whaling service by applying to the subscriber will be freely assisted in getting officers and men from the "Vineyard."

HENRY A. COFFIN.

Edgartown, Martha's Vineyard, May 12, 1851.

1852

### LETTER BAGS.

Bark Lafayette, of New Bedford, Capt. Chas. E. Allen, will sail for the Pacific Ocean about the 20th of December. Letter Bag at the Store of Ruberg & Whitford.

Bark San Francisco, Capt. Phillips, will sail from New Bedford for Atlantic Ocean about the 1st of December. Letter bag at the Store of Ruberg & Whitford.

Ship Richard Mitchell, Capt. Thaddeus C. Defriez, will sail for the Pacific Ocean about the middle of December. Letter Bag at the Store of Bates, Cook & Co.

Bark N. D. Chase, of Beverly, Capt. Chas. H. Chase, will sail for the Atlantic Ocean, about the 15th of December. Letter bag at the Store of Bates, Cook & Co.

Ship Gazelle, Capt. Wm. Upham, will sail for the Pacific Ocean, about the last of December. Letter Bag at the Store of Bates, Cook & Co.

Ship Gazelle, of Nantucket, Capt. Wm. Upham, will sail for the Pacific Ocean about the 25th of Dec. Letter Bag at the Store of Wm. H. Nye, No. 75 Main St.

Ship Richard Mitchell, of Nantucket, Capt. Thaddeus C. Defriez, will sail for the Pacific Ocean about the 20th of December. Letter Bag at the Store of Wm. H. Nye, No. 75 Main St.

Ship Martha, of Fairhaven, Capt. Samuel B. Meader, will sail for the Pacific Ocean about the first of December. Letter Bag at the store of Wm. H. Nye, No. 75 Main street.

Ship Peruvian, Capt. Edward B. Hussey, will sail for the Pacific Ocean about the last of November. Letter Bag at the Store of Bates, Cook & Co.

The ship Saratoga, Capt. Ephraim Harding, will sail from New Bedford, for N. W. Coast, about the first of December. Letter Bag at the Store of Ruberg & Whitford.

### RETURNED LETTERS.

By ship Christopher Mitchell, Capt. Sullivan, are at the Store of Bates, Cook & Co.

1852

### LETTER BAGS.

Ship Herald, of New Bedford, Capt. Geo. C. Rule, will sail for the Pacific Ocean, about the 30th of November. Letter Bag at the store of Bates, Cook & Co.

Ship Martha, of Fairhaven, Capt. Samuel B. Meader, will sail for the Pacific Ocean about the first of December. Letter Bag at the store of Wm. H. Nye, No. 75 Main street.

Ship George Howland, Capt. White, will sail for the Pacific Ocean, about the last of November. Letter Bag at the Store of Bates, Cook & Co.

Ship Peruvian, Capt. Edward B. Hussey, will sail for the Pacific Ocean about the last of November. Letter Bag at the Store of Bates, Cook & Co.

Bark Martha, of New Bedford, Capt. Chas. C. Moore, will sail for the Indian and Pacific Oceans about the 25th of November. Letter Bag at the Store of Bates, Cook & Co.

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1852

### LETTER BAGS.

Ship Rainbow, Capt. Henry B. Plaskett, will sail from New Bedford, for Pacific Ocean, about Oct. 10. Letter Bag at the Store of Bates, Cook & Co.

Park Mercator, of New Bedford, Capt. Wm. Norton, will sail for Pacific Ocean about the 25th of October. Letter Bag at the Store of Bates, Cook & Co.

### RETURNED LETTERS.

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By ship Phocion, Capt. Nichols, are at the store of Bates, Cook & Co.

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1852



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# NOTICE.

**TAKEN** by distress and to be sold at public Auction, on Saturday, the nineteenth day of June next, at two o'clock in the afternoon, in front of the premises, a certain parcel of land, situated in said Nantucket, the property of Gilbert Coffin's Heirs or Devises, being part of the property which was purchased by said Gilbert Coffin of Samuel Coleman, bounded North-westerly by Milk Street, North-easterly by land belonging to the heirs of Samuel May, South-easterly by land belonging to the said heirs or Devises of Gilbert Coffin's Estate, on which stands an Oil Factory, Try House and other buildings connected therewith, and South-westerly by New Dollar Lane, with the dwelling house, and the other buildings standing thereon, and all the rights and privileges belonging thereto and now enclosed by a fence, for the payment of the Tax assessed by the Assessors of the Town of Nantucket for the year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Fifty, to the Estate of Gilbert Coffin, viz: one hundred and ten dollars, and also for the payment of the Tax assessed by the Assessors of the Town of Nantucket for the year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Fifty One, to the Devises of Gilbert Coffin, viz: One hundred and thirteen 43-100 dollars; the total being two hundred and twenty three 43-100 dollars, and all necessary expenses.

CHAS. P. SWAIN, Col. of Taxes.  
Nantucket, May 26, 1852. -3w.

# NOTICE.

A Meeting of the Creditors of the estate of RICHARD MITCHELL & SON, will be held at the Office of George Cobb, Esq., on Thursday, October 21st, at 10 A. M., for the purpose of declaring a final dividend upon said estate, for granting a final discharge to the Debtor, and to transact such other business as may legally come before the meeting. C. B. SWAIN, Assignee, 10th mo 11. H. A. KELLEY.

**OUTFITS OF A WHALER IN 1765.**—We published not long since the requisite articles put on board ships at the present time for a whaling voyage. We now give the outfit of the schooner Lydia in the year 1765, which vessel belonged at Edgartown, and sailed from Nantucket in command of Capt. Peter Pease. It appears that some of the vessels belonging at the Vineyard at that time, sailed from Nantucket. The case is now the reverse—most of the vessels owned at Nantucket are got in readiness for sea either at Edgartown or Hyannis. Nantucket was the pioneer in the whale fishery, and for years led in this branch of business. Voyages in those days were speedily made, whales being plenty within a short distance of the island. Vessels of small dimensions were employed in the prosecution of the enterprise, and their outfits were limited, as will be seen from the following account, which we copy from the journal of the captain of the Lydia:—

5 barrels beef,	20 pounds candles,
6 barrels pork,	314 feet boards,
1200 pounds bread,	230 feet boat board,
60 pounds butter,	600 fathoms tow line,
3 small cheeses,	130 fath's main warp,
4 barrels flour,	28 guns,
12 bushels corn,	12 lances,
14 bushels meal,	3 cod lines,
100 pounds rice,	2 log lines,
2 barrel rum,	6 gimblets,
55 gallons molasses,	3 skeins of twine,
4 pounds tea,	6 bowls,
5 pounds chocolate,	6 knives and forks,
15 pounds coffee,	6 plates,
100 pounds sugar,	1 platter,
50 pounds hogs' fat,	2 brooms,
5 bushels beans,	2 hour glasses,
1 pound pepper,	1 lantern,
1 speaking trumpet,	50 pounds spun yarn,
2 hf. minute glasses,	4 pump bolts,
1 punch bowl,	3 pump brakes,
6 teacups and sauc's,	6 upper boxes,
14 lbs. powder & shot,	4 lower do.
10 pound chalk,	1 pump hook,
1 bung borer,	1 draw bucket,
3 chisels,	2 cedar pails,
1 hand saw,	1 hand pump,
1 large hammer,	2 finishing planes,
1 pump hammer,	1 drawing knife,
500 pump nails,	1 candle stick,
2 wine glasses,	3 skeins marling,
600 board nails,	3 skeins housing,
1500 shingle nails,	8 spare blocks,
24 deck nails,	1 cat block,
30 spikes,	40 fath's spare rig'ng,
1 mallet,	1 sounding lead,
1 dipsey line,	1 boat hook,
2 scrapers,	12 sail needles,
1 adze,	18 yds mending cloth,
2 axes,	1 pen knife,
5 spades,	1 jack knife,
1 tunnel,	[N. B. Mercury.

# MESSRS. CROSBY & CO., SHIP CHANDLERS, AND PROVISION DEALERS,

Pisco and Chincha Islands.  
Pisco, in Front of Landing. Chinchas', Store-ship "Parracca," Middle Islands.

**REFERENCES.**  
Messrs. Sampson & Tappan, }  
R. B. Forbes, Esq., } Boston.  
Geo. B. Upton, Esq. }  
Messrs. Vernon Brown & Son }  
Messrs. Josiah May & Son, } New York.  
John Ogden, Esq. }  
Messrs. Hadwen & Barney, Nantucket.  
Wm. J. Rotch, Esq., New Bedford.  
Messrs. Palmer, Cook & Co., } San Francisco.  
Messrs. Russell & Turgis, Manila.  
Messrs. G. F. Train & Co., Melbourne.  
Messrs. Russell & Turgis, Manila.  
Messrs. Nye & Brothers, & Co., Canton.

Whaleships will find great inducements to touch at the above places for recruits: Ships can lie off and on in the Bay of Pisco, and send their boats to the Storeship and get supplied with everything necessary for the prosecution of their voyages.

Whaleships coming out from the States, and not wishing to make a port on account of losing their crews, high port charges, &c., will find the Chinchas a convenient place to recruit.

Whaleships cruising on the (a) la go ground will always be on whaling ground on their way into the Chinchas'. Water has been brought into Pisco, and will very shortly be brought to the beach for the watering of ship's crew.

Messrs Crosby & Co., will always be prepared to disburse ships touching at the Chinchas or Pisco, for Bills of Exchange on the United States at as low rate as other ports on the coast.

Jan 17

# Particular Notice to Whalemén.

**T**HE undersigned will establish a branch of their house at Port Townsend, Washington Territory, and will give particular attention to furnishing every variety of Whalers supplies.

Port Townsend is the Port of entry on the American side of the Straits of Fuca, and in the immediate vicinity of the great Whaling Ground of the North Pacific. It is peculiarly well situated for the fitting of small vessels for short cruises, and it will be our endeavor to offer inducements to parties to engage in the Whaling business at that point.

A fleet of half-a-dozen Schooners of a hundred tons each can be fitted more speedily, and make quicker return for a less amount of capital invested than will cost to fit a first class ship for a three years' cruise around Cape Horn.

Mr. James G. Swan who has had many years experience in furnishing supplies to shipping, and who has already resided three years in Washington Territory, will remain at Port Townsend, and superintend the business of our house at that point. Having been engaged in business in San Francisco as well as this city for the past six years, we can offer superior advantages to parties desirous of entrusting their business in our hands.

Mr. Swan is now in this city, and will give any information to parties desirous of embarking in the enterprise.

**BRADSHAW & CO.,**  
Corner of California and Sansome Streets,  
SAN FRANCISCO.  
and No. 4 Broad Street,  
BOSTON.

**REFERENCES.**  
WILLIAM A. REA, Esq., }  
Messrs. PHILLIPS & MOSLEY, }  
" WARREN, FISHER & CO } BOSTON.  
" WELLS, FARGO & CO. }  
" GRAY & COFFIN. }  
" WM. T. COLEMAN & CO., NEW YORK.

Jan 6, 1857

# The Whaling Insurance Co.

**NEW BEDFORD**—hereby give notice that \$100,000 of their capital stock having been paid in and invested according to law, they are prepared to take marine risks, not exceeding \$10,000 on any one vessel.

**DIRECTORS.**  
Geo. Howland Jr., Abm. H. Howland,  
Thos. S. Hathaway, Jos. C. Delano,  
Gideon Richmond, Barton Ricketson,  
Edward L. Baker, Jona. Bourne Jr.,  
Oliver C. Swift, Edwd. W. Howland,  
B. S. Rotch, S. W. Rodman,  
Wilson Eastow, B. B. Howard,  
Clement P. Covell.  
**GEO. HOWLAND Jr., Pres't.**  
T. H. HOWLAND, Sec'y.  
F. C. SANFORD, Agent. jy10—is12mhp

# WHALEMEN'S OUTFITS.

**GEORGE R. PIERCE & CO.,**  
HAVE JUST RECEIVED  
Heavy Pilot Cloths, Heavy Satinets,  
VERMONT GRAY CASSIMERES,  
ALL WOOL KERSEYS,  
STRIPED SHIRTINGS, DUCKS,  
Denims, Long Woolen Stockings,  
WHALEMEN'S PUMPS,  
SOUWESTER MATTRESSES, BLANKETS, &c.  
which will be sold at prices to suit the times—and  
Terms Liberal. a 11

**NOW LADIES.**  
**YOU** can be accommodated with Gilt and steel Bells, Bagles, Head Ornaments, variegated Purse Twist, cheap for cash, at the New York Cash Store. Also, 1 case very cheap De Laines, rec'd from New York on Saturday night. m27



**500** prs Seamen's Pumps and Shoes, just rec'd at the Old Stand, No. 75 Main street, and will be sold cheap. Those in want, will find it to their advantage to call and examine, and buy. m27

H. S. CROCKER.

# IMPROVED SHIP CANVASS.

**COLT'S** improved Cotton Canvass, for square sails, is now offered to owners and agents of Whaling vessels, as a substitute for Hemp Sail Cloth. The manufacturers of Holt's Ship Canvass, feel great confidence in recommending it as a superior article, and in all respects suitable for square sails, such as have heretofore been made exclusively of hemp and flax duck.

The improved ship Canvass holds a better wind, will propel a vessel much faster, needs less repair, and costs less than the Russia or Scotch Sail Cloth. For sale by **H. A. KELLEY,** Exchange-Building. f22

# NOTICE TO WHALERS.

**Guanoo Vessels, and others trading in the South Pacific.**

**T**HE undersigned has always on hand a good supply as well as fresh supplies of fine Fidgeo YAMS, PORK, FRUIT, &c., and is able to furnish Vessels calling at the undermentioned port with any quantity of FRESH WATER at the shortest notice.

**AUGUSTAS UUSHELM,**  
APIA, UPOLA,  
Navigator Islands  
a24 5w

May 8, 1861

1844

1844

1844

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1844



## WHALING GUNS.

**C. C. BRAND'S IMPROVED BOMB LANCE** for killing Whales patented June 22, 1852, (and used with my Improved WHALING GUN,) has been in use nearly four years, during which time a large portion of the whaling vessels have been supplied with them. The reputation of the Bomb Lance is now so fully established that I deem it unnecessary to present individual testimonials in an advertisement, but would refer all enquirers to my Agents or to the subscriber by letter or otherwise. The subscriber will not be wanting in his efforts to make all improvements in material, manufacture, or construction, that are necessary, and is confident that they will give entire satisfaction to all who use them.

The subscribers and his Agents are prepared to fill all orders at short notice. Full Directions are sent with each box. **C. C. BRAND.**

Norwich, Conn., Jan. 10th, 1856.

Agents—

EDWARD P. HASKELL, New Bedford, Mass.

JENNY & TRIPP, Fairhaven, Mass.

PERKINS & SMITH, New London, Conn.

WHITNEY & GARDNER, Nantucket, Mass.

UNION WHARF CO., Provincetown, Mass.

R. B. JOHNSON, Warren, R. I.

THOMAS BROWN & CO., Seharbor, L. I.

RICHARD MOXON, Hull, England.

ONION & WHELOCK, 99 Maiden Lane, New York

A. M. GODDARD, Honolulu, S. Islands.

GREEN, HEATH & ALLEN, San Francisco, Cal.

ap4—11

## Outfitting Goods.

**A COMPLETE** assortment of Russia Sheetings, Scotch and Russia Duck, Methuen Cotton Duck, Linen Drilling, Blue Cotton Jeans, Denims, blue and drab Pilot Cloths, Sattinets, Blue Rob Roy, blue, green, mixed and scarlet Twilled Flannels, Stripe Kerseys, Hamilton Stripe Shirtings, Tobacco, Cigars, Knives, together with every article, usually or unusually wanted for a first rate outfit. Outfitting Clothing made to order, in the best manner, at the shortest notice. Also, a prime assortment of Clothing for Outfits, constantly on hand.

From long experience in purchasing, the subscribers feel assured in saying that they can furnish more for the dollar than any other concern on the Island. Gentlemen purchasing are respectfully requested to call and examine the very extensive stock at No. 75 Main Street.

m15

G. H. RIDDELL & CO.

**SOLAR LAMPS AND WHALE OIL.** The Solar Lamp seems to be coming into almost universal use, and it has been discovered that whale oil which costs about half the price of sperm and burns a third longer will give as much light and cause as little trouble in the Solar Lamp as any other kind of oil. A friend of ours who purchased one of the small Solar Lamps at Kelley's, informs us that two and a half cents worth of whale oil kept the lamp burning for four hours, and that it gave light sufficient for half a dozen ladies to sew by during that time. Would it not be well to have our street lanterns fitted on the solar principle? We understand it could be done at a very trifling expense and then we could have more light at half the cost.

## SEAMENS OUTFITTING GOODS.

**JUST** received at No 75 Main street, a complete assortment of the above Goods, consisting of all wool Kerseys, Heavy Flannels, Denims, Sattinets, Vermont Cassimeres, Pilot Cloths, Calico Shirting, Guernsey Frocks and Jackets, Reefes, Overalls, Oiled Clothing, &c. Seamen's Clothing of every description made up to order, at short notice.

Also—a good supply of Broadcloths, Cassimeres Doeskins & Vestings, constantly on hand, together with a general assortment of Gentlemen's Furnishing Goods, Fancy Articles, Perumery, Toilet Soaps, &c., at the very lowest Cash Prices.

Please call and examine, at No 75 Main st. ag19

WM. H. WAITT.

## COFFIN & CO.,

TALCAHUANO, COAST OF CHILE.

**B**EG leave to inform the masters and owners of Whale Ships, that this long established House continue to supply whalers on the most reasonable terms.

They also advance Money upon the United States, France or England at moderate rates.

We have constantly on hand for the supply of whalers every article which they may require, as Ship Chandlery, Cordage, Provisions, &c., &c., all of which will be furnished upon the most reasonable terms.

17 30—17

## SAMUEL B. TUCK

**HAS TAKEN AN OFFICE IN THE EAST** Room, lower floor, of the Commercial Ins. Co's building, and offers his services as a Broker for the purchase and sale of Sperm Oils, Candles and Spermaceti, Whale Oils and Soaps, and all articles connected with the trade. Also, as General Commission Merchant, and as Agent for the making up and settlement of Voyages, and adjustment of officers' and Seamen's accounts. d16—17

## WANTED.

**A**T the new Cheap Store, Centre St., Coffins' Block, Sperm and Whale Oil and Candles in Exchange for Goods. a18

## WHALEMEN'S OUTFITS.

**GEORGE R. PIERCE & CO.,**

HAVE JUST RECEIVED

Heavy Pilot Cloths, Heavy Satinets,

VERMONT GRAY CASSIMERES,

**ALL WOOL KERSEYS,**

STRIPED SHIRTINGS, DUCKS,

Denims, Long Woolen Stockings,

WHALEMEN'S PUMPS,

SOUWETER MATTRESSES, BLANKETS, &c.

which will be sold at prices to suit the times—and

Terms Liberal.

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## Particular Notice to Whalemén.

**T**HE undersigned will establish a branch of their house at Port Townsend, Washington Territory, and will give particular attention to furnishing every variety of Whalers supplies.

Port Townsend is the Port of entry on the American side of the Straits of Fuca, and in the immediate vicinity of the great Whaling Ground of the North Pacific. It is peculiarly well situated for the fitting of small vessels for short cruises, and it will be our endeavor to offer inducements to parties to engage in the Whaling business at that point.

A fleet of half-a-dozen Schooners of a hundred tons each can be fitted more speedily, and make quicker return for a less amount of capital invested than will cost to fit a first class ship for a three years' cruise around Cape Horn.

Mr. James G. Swan who has had many years experience in furnishing supplies to shipping, and who has already resided three years in Washington Territory, will remain at Port Townsend, and superintend the business of our house at that point. Having been engaged in business in San Francisco as well as this city for the past six years, we can offer superior advantages to parties desirous of entrusting their business in our hands.

Mr. Swan is now in this city, and will give any information to parties desirous of embarking in the enterprise.

BRADSHAW & CO.,

Corner of California and Sansome Streets,

SAN FRANCISCO.

and No. 4 Broad Street,

BOSTON.

REFERENCES.

WILLIAM A. BEA, Esq.,

Mess. PHILLIPS & MOORE,

WARREN, FISHER & Co.

WELLS, FARGO & Co.

GRAY & COFFIN.

W. T. COLMAN & Co., New York,

Boston, Sept. 24, 1858—3 mos.

## VALPARAISO NOTICE.

**P**RE-PAID letters to masters of whalerships, directed to us, care of Jno. M. Freeman, Esq., Panama, will be forwarded by us, free of charge, to any part of the Pacific.

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NYE, & CO., Valparaiso.











